

Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

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Should FICA taxes be deducted from foreign workers in the CNMI?

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17
DAYS TO GO
BEFORE
Christmas

I N S I D E



Welfare Fraud

A Seattle couple claimed welfare but lived in a \$1.2 million home and vacationed extensively.

BUSINESS...Page 15



Haunting Images

As American troops prepare to leave Iraq, three photographers remember their most significance images.

FOCUS...Page 17

Woman found guilty of immigration document fraud. PAGE 3
Babauta urges cap on number of Medicaid beneficiaries. PAGE 5

'Excessive' hospital expenses bared

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta blames the excessive expenditures of the Commonwealth Health Center in past years for the sad state of the hospital.

See EXCESSIVE on Page 4

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta gestures as he addresses members and guests of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce at Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

A bagful of wishes and gift requests

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

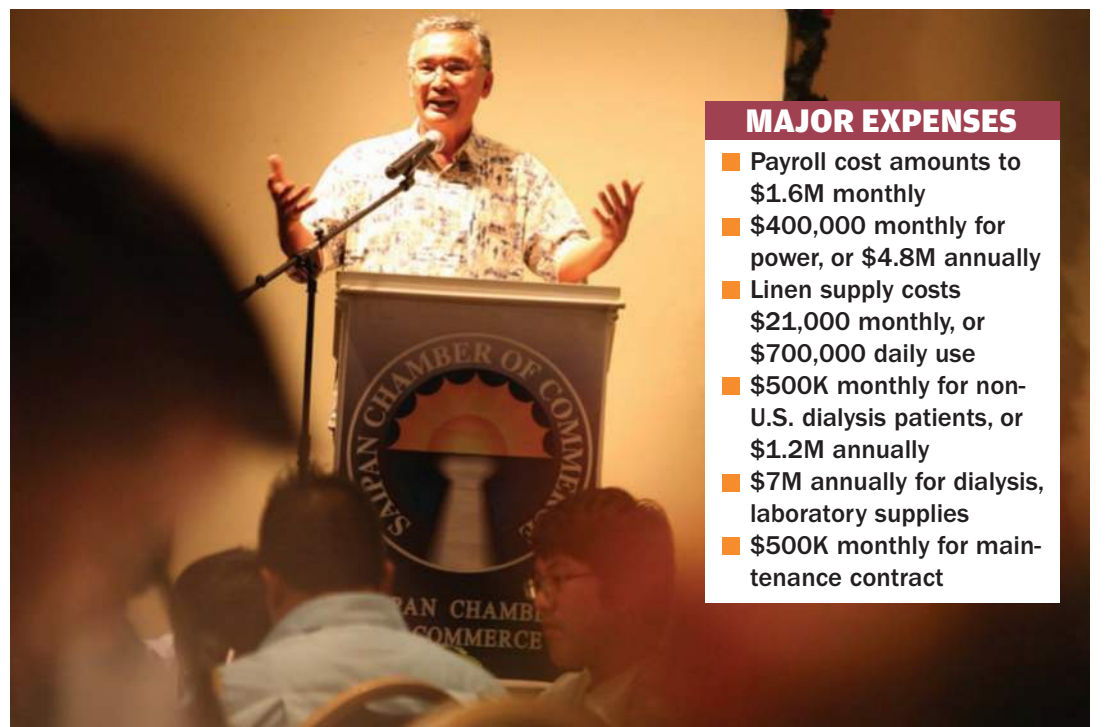
From an X-Box to the release of tax rebate checks and repeal of Article 12, members and guests of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce asked "Santa Claus" for the things they want for Christmas during the Chamber's general membership meet-

See BAGFUL on Page 4



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Santa Claus, left, listens as Saipan Chamber of Commerce executive director Richard Pierce, right, tells him his Christmas wish—two to three good garment factories on Saipan—at the Chamber's general membership meeting held at Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan yesterday. "Santa Claus" paused and said, "Didn't that get you into trouble years back?"



MAJOR EXPENSES

- Payroll cost amounts to \$1.6M monthly
- \$400,000 monthly for power, or \$4.8M annually
- Linen supply costs \$21,000 monthly, or \$700,000 daily use
- \$500K monthly for non-U.S. dialysis patients, or \$1.2M annually
- \$7M annually for dialysis, laboratory supplies
- \$500K monthly for maintenance contract

HEALTHCARE CORP. BOARD TO SENATE:

\$131M in CHC receivables

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

For a quarter of a century, the Commonwealth Health Center—now the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.—has accumulated receivables of some \$131 million, which is a lot bigger than the CNMI government's fiscal year

2012 budget of \$102 million.

CHC executive officer James E. Phillips and four CHC board members led by Joaquin Torres shared this with senators during a meeting yesterday morning in the Senate chamber on Capital Hill.

Senators also asked health officials on a host of issues—from what they described as high turn-

See \$131M on Page 4

Surge in number of CW petitions

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As expected, the long lines at the post office close to the critical Nov. 28 cutoff date led to a surge in the number of Commonwealth-only worker petitions filed through Dec. 2 and that number is currently at 8,227.

This is a 198-percent jump from only 2,759 pe-

See SURGE on Page 4

FAST FACTS

As of Dec. 2, 2012

Number of foreign workers petitioned:	8,227
Saipan:	7,463
Tinian:	413
Rota:	351
Number of CW petitions filed:	4,172
Number of employers that filed petitions:	1,300
Number of petitions rejected:	34
Petitions yet to be data entered:	799
Pct. change from filings through Nov. 25:	198 percent

Source: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services



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Local

'Dr. Lebamoff was overworked'

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Dr. Steve Lebamoff, the lone physician at the Tinian Health Center, has resigned and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta believes the main reason for the doctor's departure was his being overworked.

Lebamoff was hired last year by Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz from Hawaii for \$130,000 a year. A plan to hire more doctors for the center was stymied

by the lack of funds.

The center has 15 nurses and accommodates about 50 patients daily.

Babauta said yesterday that Lebamoff is technically on leave until the end of his contract in January. He said the doctor cited in his resignation letter "personal reasons" for his exit. The corporation board earlier said that it is in the process of offering a new contract to Lebamoff.

"I sensed that the doctor was overworked because his service is 24-7 for Tinian. I wish we

could have two to three doctors that can rotate at the center so we can let each one of them spend and enjoy their day off with their families," said Babauta.

He said that recruiting doctors for a small island like Tinian calls for a higher salary, which he considers as among the corporation's biggest challenges.

At the Commonwealth Health Center, doctors' salaries average \$125,000 per annum.

Babauta, who, describes Lebamoff as an outstanding physician, said the demand for higher salaries will remain a challenge for the corporation.

He said the corporation has already started looking for a doctor to replace Lebamoff. At present, mid-level providers attend to the needs of the center's patients. A mid-level provider is not a physician but is licensed to diagnose and treat patients under the supervision of a physician.

Raho completes healthcare crop. board; management team also created

Anthony Raho, a longtime employee of the Commonwealth Health Center, was named the last member of the seven-member board Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

Healthcare corp. chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta disclosed Raho's appointment in an interview yesterday at the Saipan Chamber of Commerce general membership meeting.

Raho has been the hospital's inpatient pharmacist for over 19 years. He will represent the non-physician employees of the CHC and will take part in the decision-making for the public hospital. Raho bested other nominees for the post and his selection was welcomed yesterday by the CEO.

The other board members are chair Joaquin Torres, Pedro Dela Cruz, Roy Rios, Anthony Aguon, Dr. Michael Deary, and Babauta.

Babauta has also created a seven-member management team who will directly work with him. The group is composed of financial officer Esther Muña, Medical Services director Karen Buettner, Dr. Michael Leary as director for Medical Affairs, medical director for Public Health Dr. Dan Lamar, Nursing director Leticia Reyes, director of Public Health Services Roxanne Diaz, legal counsel James Kearney, and executive officer James Phillips. Five of these appointees are from within the corporation.

Babauta said that creating the team saves the corporation from hiring outside experts, which could cost the organization up to \$500,000. (Moneth Deposa)

REGARDLESS OF RANK, FAMILIAL TIES

AG: OAG endeavors to uphold justice

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The Office of the Attorney General endeavors to uphold justice regardless of rank, familial ties, or one's career path, according to Attorney General Edward T. Buckingham in comments related to the filing of a criminal case against Police Sgt. Vicente O. Tagabuel for allegedly stealing utility services.

Buckingham told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday in an email that, consistent with the criminal information that has been filed, they believe that Tagabuel committed theft of utility services. Buckingham said they intend to present evidence of this crime in court.

"We respect that any accused person is presumed innocent and the Office of the Attorney General is required to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt," he said.

Assistant attorney general Russell Lorfing stated in the criminal information that Tagabuel "committed the theft

of utility services totaling in the approximate amount of \$196.70 by bypassing the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s meter" from April 15 to 27, 2011.

Tagabuel was served with penal summons to appear in the Superior Court to answer the charges on Dec. 12, 2011, at 9am.

Tagabuel is with the Department of Public Safety's Summons and Warrant Office. It was not immediately clear if he has been suspended while the case is pending in court.

The OAG recently charged Joanna C. Pai and her mother, Columba I. Chong, with the same offense, alleging that the two stole utility services worth over \$51,000.

Attorney Rexford Kosack, counsel for Mrs. Pai, asked the court to dismiss the case, saying the only reason why Mrs. Pai has been charged is because she is the wife of Public Auditor Michael Pai, who is at loggerheads with Buckingham.

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Jury finds woman guilty of immigration document fraud

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

A federal jury yesterday found a woman guilty of immigration document fraud when she lied in her petition for her second husband, a Bangladeshi national,

CRIME OF THE WEEK

Chalan Kanoa robbery

Crime Stoppers is seeking the community's assistance for information on a robbery incident that occurred outside a residence in Chalan Kanoa.

On Saturday, Dec. 3, 2011, around 4am, the victim, a 45-year-old Chinese female, parked her car—a 1997 green Hyundai Accent two-door sedan—outside her residence located east of the Chalan Kanoa cemetery. The victim was sitting in her car when the suspect, described as a male dressed in black pants, long-sleeved shirt with a hood, approached her car.

The suspect attempted to open the driver's door, which was locked. The suspect rushed to the passenger side and opened the door. The suspect sprayed the victim with mace and escaped with the victim's purse, running toward Glory Market.

The items stolen include a black Guess purse, \$200 in cash, a \$2 bill, CNMI driver's license, CNMI Treasury child tax and stimulus checks, and a Sky brand cell phone.

DPS and Crime Stoppers are seeking help from the public. Contact the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272 should you want to remain anonymous or use our website at www.nmi-crimestoppers.com. Crime stoppers pays up to \$1,000 for any information leading to an arrest. It pays to call. **(Crime Stoppers)**

that she has never filed a similar petition before.

The trial of 42-year-old Rowena Agnes Urumelog began on Monday and deliberations stated late Tuesday afternoon. At 11:10am yesterday, the court read the jurors' verdict, siding with the prosecution's contention that Urumelog deliberately lied in her petition for her second husband as she had also filed an immigration petition for her first husband.

Ports Police staff in domestic violence gets 3-day sentence

A staff at the Commonwealth Ports Police who was arrested in September for allegedly beating up his girlfriend at her house on Navy Hill pleaded guilty yesterday to disturbing the peace as part of a plea deal.

Superior Court associate judge Kenneth L. Govendo sentenced Peter Eugene Borja to six months behind bars, all suspended except for three days, with credit for the two days he had already served in jail. Borja was directed to serve the remaining day of his sentence on Dec. 17.

Upon release, he will be placed on a six-month probation, required to perform 100 hours of community service, and pay a \$100 fine and \$25 court costs. He was also directed to pay restitution to the victim.

Police had arrested the 36-year-old Borja for assault and battery, disturbing the peace, and criminal mischief.

The victim complained of pain in the middle of her back and neck. **(Ferdie de la Torre)**

sentencing.

Assistant U.S. attorney Beverly McCallum prosecuted the case.

Hanson refused to speak to the media after the hearing except to say that he will be filing post-trial motions.

According to the U.S. government, on Urumelog's immigration petition for her second husband, Abdullah Al Mamun, on July 6, 2009, Urumelog, a U.S. citizen, falsely declared

that she had never before petitioned for him or another alien. Actually, Urumelog had filed on Jan. 22, 2003 an immigration petition for her first husband, Md. Jahangir Alam, at the time a Bangladeshi national.

Public hearing on planned dog shelter in CK

The Zoning Office will be holding a public hearing for the application for a dog shelter that will be built in Chalan Kanoa.

The hearing is set for Dec. 14, 5pm at the Zoning Board conference room at the second floor of Joeten Dandan building.

Acting Zoning administrator Therese T. Ogumoro Monday said that the proposed dog transfer shelter will be on Lot 012-H17 between Casilda and Konsolacion Streets behind the post office in Chalan Kanoa.

She said the transfer shelter aims to facilitate the Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Control Program by having a space where program staff can keep stray dogs captured at the southern end of the island.

While they have advertised the public hearing, Ogumoro said they have yet to receive written comments about it. She said they expect to receive written comments within the week. Deadline for comments is at 4:30pm on Dec. 13.

To send comments, email therese.ogumoro@zoning.gov.mp or hand deliver it to the Zoning Office at the second floor of the Joeten Dandan building. **(Clarissa V. David)**

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Part of Samsung's Galaxy S series, this high-end Android smartphone sports a huge 4-inch OLED display, 1.5 GHz processor, and 5-megapixel camera with LED flash and video capture. Other features include Bluetooth 2.0, Wi-Fi with DLNA streaming, and a 3.5mm audio jack.

htc EVO™ 3D
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This update to the EVO 4G adds 3D screen and camera, including video, plus a faster 3rd-generation dual-core Snapdragon processor. Other features include Android 2.3, HTC's Sense interface, a huge, high-resolution display, and HD video output to TV. Other features include Wi-Fi, memory card slot, and 3.5mm audio jack. The EVO 3D is surely a phone that will blow away the competition!

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This Android smartphone is notable for its large, high-resolution display and 3G EVDO data. Other features include 3-megapixel camera, Wi-Fi, accelerometer, 3.5mm headphone jack, and memory card slot.

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SURGE

From Page 1

tioned foreign workers as of Nov. 25, three days before the critical deadline.

Both the CNMI business sector and the government believe a figure close to 8,227 is the number of foreign workers that the weak economy can hire or absorb right now, as opposed to the over 22,000 worker cap estimated.

“That may be a good way to put it—that this is the number of foreign workers that businesses need or can afford to hire right now,” Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Douglas Brennan told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

The 8,227 petitioned workers comprise 61 percent of the 13,399 foreign workers estimated to be “potentially eligible” for CW status that USCIS stated in its final rule issued on Sept. 7.

But Brennan said there may be many other foreign workers still on island but were not petitioned for CW because there are just no available jobs, or they do not qualify for CW status.

“We were given a cap of 22,000 workers but with the economy on a further decline, 8,500 to 9,000 foreign workers may just be the right figure. But that’s only my estimate,” the general manager of Microl Corp. added.

Press secretary Angel Demapan, when asked for comment, said 61 percent “is definitely a more realistic figure” than the previous one.

“However, if this figure will stabilize between the 60-70 percent range, then that could be an indicator of the decline in private employers. On the contrary, the figure also indicates that 39 percent of those ‘potentially eligible’ for CW are somewhere out there either without employment or being employed illegally,” Demapan told *Saipan Tribune*.

Regardless, he said, if these people continue to remain in the CNMI without status, “then there is absolute cause for concern in regards to the impact this would have on our society and on our

resources.”

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial had said he wants to stop the federal government from granting a one-year parole to certain foreign workers not petitioned for CW status and could be a “burden” to the CNMI.

Petitions filed, rejected

Marie Thérèse Sebrechts, regional media manager at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, said yesterday that USCIS’ California Service Center had data entered 4,172 I-129CW petitions through Friday, Dec. 2.

She said this figure does not include “unprocessed” petitions that were received late last week. As of Friday, there were 799 petitions that had not yet been data entered, she said.

Some 1,300 so far filed I-129CW petitions.

“A total of 8,227 CW-1 workers are sponsored on these petitions,” said Sebrechts.

Of this figure, 7,463 workers are on Saipan, 413 are on Tinian, and 351 on Rota.

Sebrechts said 34 petitions have so far been rejected for the following reasons:

- Work location is not the CNMI;
- Old revision of the form;
- Too much money included on the check;
- Too little money included with the petition; and
- Missing pages.

Rejection is different from denial. For rejected petitions, employers are notified of errors that they need to correct before the petitions are actually accepted for review. USCIS has yet to release the number and nature of denials, which can still be appealed.

Form I-129CW is the form used by an employer to petition an alien to temporarily work as a nonimmigrant in the CNMI as a CW-1 transitional worker.

CW filings continue after Nov. 28

Employers can still petition foreign national workers for CW status after Nov.

28, 2011, if those foreign nationals are in a “lawful immigration status in the CNMI” even if the worker is not currently employed.

A “lawful immigration status” can mean having valid parole.

USCIS said as long as the I-129CW petition or application for any other nonimmigrant employment-based category is submitted before the foreign national’s parole expires, an employer can petition for a foreign national who:

- was lawfully present in the CNMI before Nov. 28, 2011;
- has an extension of parole until Jan. 31, 2011 or beyond; and
- does not work without authorization after Nov. 27, 2011.

The foreign national can also be an applicant for a grant of status.

“This is where USCIS gives a foreign national a federal immigration status without the foreign national having to leave the United States [in this case, the CNMI],” said USCIS.

If the I-129CW is filed after Nov. 28, 2011, the foreign national would not be eligible for continuation of employment and cannot work until the I-129CW petition is approved and CW-1 status granted.

“A person is not ‘lawfully present’ if they are engaged in unauthorized employment,” said USCIS.

In an effort to streamline public inquiries, USCIS has created a special e-mail box for inquiries related to the CNMI, including questions about CW petitions and parole, among other things. The e-mail address is CNMI.CSC@uscis.dhs.gov.

This mailbox will be monitored by customer service personnel who are familiar with CNMI issues.

On FICA taxes

Brennan said the application of Federal Insurance Contribution Act taxes on foreign workers who were previously exempt is a “further stumbling block” and adds to the already costly conduct of business in the CNMI.

FICA covers Social Security and Medicare taxes.

The Chamber’s stance is that “until such time evidence is offered to the contrary, foreign nationals employed in the CNMI prior to Nov. 27, 2011, and previously exempted from paying FICA taxes by bilateral agreements with the U.S., would now fall subject to individual and employer FICA tax contributions.”

This means affected employees will

be subject to FICA withholding for wages earned on and after Nov. 28.

A foreign worker earning a minimum wage of \$5.05 an hour will have a FICA tax deduction of over \$45 a month. Employee’s FICA contribution is 5.65 percent of their salary.

For employers, this means an additional expense of almost \$62 a month in employer’s share for every employee required to pay FICA taxes. Employer’s share is 7.65 of the employee’s salary.

BAGFUL

From Page 1

ing at Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan yesterday.

While seated on Santa’s lap, a male student asked for an X-Box. Then there was Rey Perez of Hard Rock Café wishing for the release of tax rebate checks.

Chamber executive director Richard Pierce, during his turn, wished for “two to three good garment factories” on Saipan to manufacture Santa’s clothes, for example, and help revive the CNMI economy.

Santa Claus, with Mrs. Santa by his side, told Pierce that he’s old but if his memory serves him right, “Didn’t that get you into trouble years back?”

When businessman Bud White’s turn came, he asked Santa Claus to help him collect from the CNMI government some \$100,000 in receivables. When William Wanket, dressed as Santa Claus, and White, came face to face, some members of the audience thought they were twins.

Northern Marianas College president Sharon Hart had a different Christmas wish—that all the high school students present at the Chamber meeting would be able to finish college and be the force

to turn the CNMI economy around.

Santa Claus was the Chamber’s surprise visitor, giving members and guests the chance to personally tell him their holiday wishes.

On a serious note, Santa Claus said that Christmas is not about gifts and money, but “about being nice to each other.”

“I’d like to see everybody smile,” he said, adding that he’s saddened to read and hear only negative news. He wishes there will be good news as well.

Chamber president Douglas Brennan, after enumerating the somber economic realities facing the CNMI, brought up a “happier note.” Brennan said the USS *Columbia* recently made its maiden voyage to Saipan for rest and recreation, and its commander, Dennis Klein, “had nothing but nice things to say about the island and mentioned that Saipan came highly recommended by other ships in the fleet.”

“This is exactly the kind of reputation we want. We need to continue our efforts in this regard and take our hospitality to the next level,” he said.

Military ships anchored off the Saipan lagoon alone each contribute over \$1 million to the CNMI economy annually, including the purchase of fuel, maintenance, and supply services.

\$131M

From Page 1

over rate of providers including the resignation of the lone physician on Tinian, Dr. Steve Lebamoff, to a lack of an organizational chart, absence of an adopted rules and procedures, long waiting hours for patients, and lack of medical equipment and services.

“Their work is not easy but they have to be conscious of the decisions they make because they affect peoples’ lives,” said Senate Health Committee chair Sen. Ralph Torres (R-Saipan).

Torres said the Senate seeks to work closely with the corporation to ensure the latter would be able to efficiently run a hospital and centers to provide the best care possible.

Phillips told senators that in their conservative estimate, 80 percent of the \$131 million receivables are “doubtful or questionable accounts,” which means it would be harder to collect them.

But Phillips pointed out that such designation does not mean the amount will be “written off.” The receivables include unpaid hospital bills accumulated since the opening of the only government hospital in 1986.

“The other 20 percent has a better chance of collection,” he added.

The health officials assured senators led by Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) and Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian) that the corporation has been doing extensive review of hospital billings, collections and other financial data. Among other things, the corporation has taken an aggressive approach in collecting unpaid

hospital bills.

Corporation CEO Juan N. Babauta, speaking separately before members of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce yesterday, believes that only a quarter of the collectibles may actually be collected because of the statute of limitations. He said millions of millions of undecoded billings for patients have sat idle for many years.

“CHC is barely collecting only 10 to 15 cents on the dollar that is expended. I guarantee you that if any private clinic is only collecting such amount, they will shut down the next day. I have to tell you, the hospital has a problem.”

Based on the financial records he obtained, some 50 percent of the services being provided at the only public hospital on island is not being charged due to faults in the system.

Just yesterday, a woman told *Saipan Tribune* that her child is now 12 years old but she has yet to receive her billings from CHC for the delivery of her baby.

Torres said senators have yet to receive from the corporation an organization chart, articles of corporation and rules and procedures, among other things.

Anthony Aguon, one of the health-care corporation board members, stressed during the meeting with senators the need to amend the law so that they would become a “governing board” rather than just an “advisory board” and accomplish many of the corporation’s goals.

Torres said he has a bill that would turn the “advisory board” into a “governing board” but that bill has been pending in the House of Representatives for months now.

EXCESSIVE

From Page 1

For payroll alone, the former Department of Public Health needed to fork out \$800,000 bi-weekly, which translates to \$1.6 million every month or \$19.2 million each year, Babauta said, speaking at yesterday’s general membership meeting of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

In previous fiscal years, DPH was allocated \$44 million annually, more than half of which went to payroll. This fiscal year, the corporation was allocated just \$5 million as seed money, an amount that Babauta said makes it impossible to sustain the hospital’s operations.

He said the corporation needs to do some streamlining so it could operate based on a realistic budget, even if it mean laying off staff.

“I have to do some streamlining. I know that in this community and in this culture, firing people is not a very good idea but we probably have to do it,” said Babauta.

Just recently, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. sent a collection agency to the hospital to force it to pay its bills, he said.

Babauta said that CHC’s power use is averaging at \$400,000 monthly, equivalent to an expenditure of \$4.8 million a year in utilities alone. “I almost fell off my seat when I first learned about it.”

He said CHC kept a dead body in the morgue for over four years, which con-

tributed to the increasing cost of power at the hospital. “The hospital kept this body in the morgue for four years and taxpayers were paying for it.” The corporation finally decided to give the body a decent burial, in consultation with the CNMI’s Chinese consul.

As procedure, hospital staff put its dirty linens in a basket and sends it to an outside cleaner. Without proper control and accountability of the used supply, CHC merely pays for what the contractor bills it. In August 2011, CHC was billed \$21,000 for its linens, which translates to roughly \$700 being spent daily for this service.

“I can take the \$700 and provide CHC a clean brand new linen everyday if that’s the cost!” he said.

Because of the lack of proper control and accountability, Babauta said that supplies have been “walking out” the facility unnoticed. “Literally, wheelchairs and linens walk out of the hospital because there is no control.”

‘Housekeeping contract’

Babauta said the hospital also pays an average of \$500,000 monthly to keep its buildings clean. In the last four years, DPH paid \$2.5 million for its housekeeping service.

For supplies, he said \$7 million is spent yearly for dialysis patients (\$4 million) and laboratory supplies (\$3 million).

Babauta disclosed that there are 20 dialysis patients, including non-U.S. citizens, who continue to receive treat-

ment at CHC, costing CNMI taxpayers \$1.2 million yearly. On a monthly basis, these patients incur \$500,000 worth of medical services.

“This has to stop. Somebody has to pay unless you, taxpayers, are willing to pay for their bill. We have to begin charging [them],” he told the crowd.

For the inter-island medical referral program, which covers Rota and Tinian, the two islands average 25 referrals in any give month and CHC pays for their airfare, lodging, and ground transportation. This is in addition to paying for the salaries of two FTEs and the three meals provided daily to these patients. Babauta said this means an additional 75-meal expenditure for the corporation.

“I told the Legislature to prepare themselves because they will start paying for this stuff. This is what’s causing the hospital’s financial nightmares,” he said.

Babauta also found out that CHC has been very generous in allowing private clinics to dump their biohazard waste in the hospital’s sewage with no charge at all.

“I didn’t know that we belong to the Salvation Army. I don’t have anything against private clinics but let me tell you the real facts: private clinics close at 4:30pm each day, CHC keeps its doors open 24/7. Private clinics take the cream of the crop in terms of health insurance payment, CHC gets the rest; but private clinics can refuse seeing you, CHC cannot,” he said.

Babauta urges cap on number of Medicaid beneficiaries

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta is urging the Legislature to conduct an oversight hearing on the Medicaid program, which continuously to certify eligible recipients even without having enough funding to provide for their services.

The Medicaid program was first implemented in 1979. It is a federal/state program administered by states and funded by both federal and states revenues

through a 50-50 matching ratio. Each year, the federal cap is set at \$5 million and requires an equal amount from the CNMI government. Any expenses in excess of the \$10-million level is shouldered by the state.

Babauta disclosed in an interview yesterday that the program currently has 18,000 eligible recipients, compared to the 3,000 clients recorded in 1994. Without a policy that caps the total number of people that will be certified every year, the local government has been shouldering millions of dollars on top of

the \$5 million local matching it provides for the program.

"What we really need to work on is the removal of the cap and maybe changing the current ratio [of 50-50 matching] because we cannot afford it anymore," Babauta said.

Babauta has already asked for Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's (Ind-MP) help in asking the federal government with this. He said it would greatly aid the CNMI if the reimbursement rate is changed to a 72-25 ratio, similar to what other states like Mississippi enjoys.

At present, the CNMI government owes some \$800,000 in reimbursement for patients' services. Babauta said he is not so worried about this unpaid amount as the future of the program in general.

"The Medicaid office continues to certify people as eligible so our numbers are increasing but with the same cap [of \$5 million]. So we are certifying more and more people with inability to pay for services and that's my problem. This is all about who pays for the services and if we don't have the money

for it, we really should not be certifying any more people. We don't want to mislead people, but that's what happening now. We certify people, knowing... we cannot afford to pay for their services," said Babauta.

The CNMI government, through the Legislature, can help if a measure is crafted that will limit the number of people that will be certified under the

program each year.

"I understand that if they qualify they need to be certified...but we have to be realistic on how much we can afford. I am urging the Legislature to hold open hearings for parties so everybody knows where we are because this situation worsens our financial problems than help. I believe this is really about policy," he said.

Seaman falls from vessel's crane, sues for injuries

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

A seaman is suing the U.S. government for injuries he sustained when he allegedly fell last September from a crane's ladder and dropped to the deck of a vessel that was anchored off the Commonwealth.

Randall J. Brown is suing the United States in the U.S. District Court for the NMI for Jones Act negligence and for the alleged unseaworthiness of its vessel, USNS *Major Stephen W. Pless*, one of the prepositioned ships off the Saipan lagoon.

Brown, through counsels Bruce Berline and William Fitzgerald, is demanding unspecified damages, court costs, and interest.

For the past 18 months,

the lawyers said, Brown has worked, and presently works, as a seaman aboard *Pless*, providing critical maintenance and work on the vessel.

On Sept. 26, 2011, Brown was ordered to work on the vessel's crane that required him to ascend the crane's ladder. Berline and Fitzgerald said that the ladder did not have a safety cage around it, and had narrow rungs with sharp edges.

As Brown was descending the crane's ladder, his boot allegedly became snagged in the ladder's lower rung, causing him to fall a short distance onto the vessel's deck below the crane's ladder.

The vessel's deck, including the portion of the deck below and around the crane's ladder, was wet due to rain that day. The lawyers said that the vessel's

deck and around the crane ladder's landing area did not have any non-skid materials on it.

That same day, a portion of the vessel's deck—around and below the crane's ladder—had been recently painted. Thus, the lawyers said, the deck area underneath and around the crane's ladder was unsafe and slippery.

When Brown fell from the crane's ladder, he landed on his feet but because the vessel's deck lacked sufficient grip, he slipped on the unsafe deck.

"As a result, Brown suffered severe injury to his right knee, including, without limitation, injury to his medical collateral ligament and his meniscus, severe swelling and various contusions," the lawyers said. Brown also allegedly sustained various bruises and

swelling on his body.

Brown's injuries, Berline and Fitzgerald said, required and continues to require medical attention and physical therapy.

The lawyers asserted that Brown's injuries were also caused by the vessel's unseaworthy condition as the vessel or part of the vessel, its gear, equipment and/ or crew, its deck and/or the crane's ladder, were not reasonably fit for their intended purposes.

International Shipholding Corp. and its subsidiaries, Waterman Steamship Corp. and LMS Shipmanagement Inc., operate the *Pless* under time-charter with the Military Sealift Command.

Brown was hired by LMS Shipmanagement Inc. as a seaman assigned to serve as a member of the crew aboard the *Pless*.

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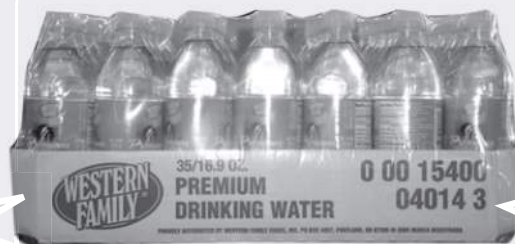
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MCS student learns the ropes of news reporting

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

A Mount Carmel School student learned the ropes of being a news reporter for a day as part of the Chamber Student Career Exploration Day yesterday.

Eleventh-grader Patricia Macaraig was among the students who were part of the program that serves as "an opportunity for today's employers to meet tomorrow's employees and help them explore what opportunities may exist, aside from joining the government payroll or moving off island."

Macaraig, 15, spent the one-day program with *Saipan Tribune* reporter Moneth Deposa and attended the Northern Marianas College Start Smart event

at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall and the Saipan Chamber of Commerce membership meeting at the Fiesta Resort and Spa's Hibiscus Hall.

During both events, Macaraig was introduced to various news sources and got a first-hand experience about a day in the life of a news reporter.

Macaraig, the eldest child of Philippine Consul General Medardo Macaraig and wife Teresa Roselyn Macaraig, takes photos and writes articles for the Mount Carmel School's official publication, *The Round Table*.

In an interview, Macaraig revealed how she was encouraged

to fill out the application form for the Chamber Student Career Exploration Day. She said she's always taken an interest in taking pictures.

When she joined *The Round Table* last school year, she initially started with just taking photos. This year, however, she wrote her first article about the school's royal court.

"I'm really excited because this is the kind of job I see myself doing—writing and working with my camera. I see myself taking up a course in mass communications when I go to college," said Macaraig.

After attending two events, Macaraig realized how engaged

a reporter can be. "You get busy but it's worth it," she said. "It's something I want to experience as a job."

Working with an actual reporter, Macaraig said, allowed her to discover how to collect information. She noted that the challenging part of the process would be getting the facts straight and putting them together in a news article.

"Hopefully with this experience, I'll do a better job in our school paper. I learned the basics," she added.

Other participants of the Chamber Student Career Exploration Day had the chance to learn more about different businesses and industries such as banking, restaurant, law practice, and hotel management.



Macaraig



COMMON SENSE PARENTING

The Division of Youth Services Parent Education Program had its recent graduates on Common Sense Parenting, and Lucy Schilling was the parent trainer. The Common Sense Parenting classes are designed as practical approaches to help parents be more positive with their children, using more effective discipline that will motivate their children to cooperate and behave in a more positive and acceptable manner. The classes are offered free of charge to parents with children from ages 5 to 12.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Alpino: Denial does not mean failure

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Although the decision of the NMI Scholarship Board to reject her honors scholarship application came as a big shock to her and her family, Katelyn Alpino said Tuesday that this will not stop her from achieving her goals.

Alpino is the former valedictorian of Rota High School. As an honor student, she was supposed to be a beneficiary of the Honors scholarship program of the CNMI Scholarship Office but her application was rejected as her grades did not meet the office's requirements. Despite appeals filed with the Public School System and the

Scholarship Office board, she wasn't considered for the financial award.

"Being denied the CNMI Honors Scholarship came as a big shock to both me and my family. We worked extremely hard to appeal the original decision, but unfortunately, things didn't work out the way we wanted it to. Although I did not qualify for it, I continue to remain hopeful that there are many other opportunities out there that will be available for me in time," she said.

Katelyn is a pre-medicine freshman student at the Philadelphia University.

With the support of her family and friends, she is confident she will make it through college despite the extra financial burden. "I believe that everyone struggles and for me, this denial does not mean failure. It does not in any way stop me from working to achieve my goals. Although it means that I have to work twice as hard, I am determined to move forward and put this behind me. I believe that everything happens for a reason and that God has a plan for everything, so I continue to trust and put my faith in Him," she added.

The CNMI Scholarship advi-



Alpino

sory board had denied Alpino's appeal to recalculate and approve her Honors scholarship application, saying the award is not automatically given to the valedictorian and salutatorian. The board explained that Public Law 7-32, which directly awards the Honors scholarship to valedictorian and salutatorian students on Tinian and Rota, had been amended by P.L. 14-37, which eliminated the automatic awarding of financial assistance.

Arthur Alpino, Katelyn's father, said that they were saddened by the outcome and felt that his daughter "was robbed and deprived of her rights." With this issue, he said it opens the eyes of the public to the realization that nothing has been done to correct the "wrongdoing" committed against his daughter.

MMAC committee holds first team meeting today

The 2012 Marianas March Against Cancer Committee will hold its first team captains' meeting today, Dec. 8, 2011, at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Chamolinian Room. The meeting will begin promptly at 10am.

"After receiving community feedback, the 2012 MMAC committee has decided that getting an early start is needed in order to ensure all teams get am-

ple time to prepare for this great event. We're inviting all 2011 MMAC teams to attend as well as any potential teams interested in participating in MMAC 2012," said 2012 MMAC over-all committee chair Catherine Attao-Toves.

Items to be discussed include the financial report from the Commonwealth Cancer Association and proposed changes

for MMAC 2012. The CCA will be presenting a report detailing how all funds raised at the MMAC are used for cancer patient assistance and other cancer-related services.

"We will discuss some important changes for the 2012 MMAC so the participation of all teams is extremely appreciated. Teams will also get a chance to review how all funds

they help raise are being spent. With the holiday season in full swing, we hope all interested members of the community find the time to attend this important meeting in support of the battle against cancer," said Attao-Toves.

For more information on the 2012 MMAC, email attao20@gmail.com or emmanuel.borja@gmail.com. (PR)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Dec. 8, 1999

Students say NMC should conduct PR blitz

What could be a better way to market the Northern Marianas College but to utilize its own radio station KRNM to advertise its programs and activities. An advertising proposal conducted by eight students enrolled in Fundamentals of Advertising Class under Prof. Rik Villegas has recommended that the College maximize the full potential of the radio station to inform the public about the various projects carried out by NMC. It was the first marketing plan ever made by students of NMC in 18 years. The students made the presentation to NMC officials at the Pacific Islands Club recently.

Micronesia urged to develop cruise tourism

An official of the Pacific Asia Travel Association has urged tourism officials in the Northern Marianas and other Micronesian islands to develop cruise tourism, considered as one of the biggest growth areas in the travel industry. According to Sharon Hannaford, PATA managing director in the Pacific, officials in various Micronesian islands should begin developing their port facilities so that they can sell their destinations to various cruise companies. Ms. Hannaford said this market will ensure the arrival of high quality of tourists on a regular basis which would have low impact on the destination. Enticing the cruise vessels would also resolve problems of constructing big hotels to accommodate guests.

Dec. 8, 2000

PSS seeks 20 pct. differential

Marianas High School administrators are pressing the State Board of Education to provide principals and vice principals 20 percent salary differentials that they believe they are entitled to as school officials tasked with administering over 1,800 students. MHS Principal James Denight, in a letter addressed to the BOE Fiscal and Personnel Committee, has proposed that the Public School System consider giving out one-time differentials each year for administrators specifically in campuses handling over a thousand students such as MHS and Hopwood Junior High School.

Use of MPLT funds to pay landowners opposed

The Marianas Public Land Trust has opposed a legislative initiative filed in the House of Representatives that will seek to tap its own funds to pay landowners who gave up their properties to the government for public use. MPLT trustees said the measure would take away their authority to manage investments of the agency in order to benefit few residents primarily from Saipan. House Legislative Initiative 12-3 will affect the investment policy set forth by the MPLT and curtail the growth of its capital for the next 21 years, they said in their testimony to the House Natural Resources Committee.

Dec. 8, 2002

Draft critical habitat analysis out

The direct cost of designating critical habitats on Guam and Rota for several protected species over a 10-year period would amount to less than half-a-million dollars. This was learned in a draft U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service report released Friday, which outlined an economic analysis of the potential impacts of designating critical habitats for the Mariana fruit bat, Guam Micronesian kingfisher, and Mariana crow on Guam and for the Mariana crow on Rota. The report indicates that in 10 years, direct costs that would be attributable to critical habitat on the two islands would be relatively minor at a total of less than \$555,000. Indirect costs, which are described as uncertain, were not quantified.

Illegal remittance operations cost govt thousands in dollars

The CNMI Department of Commerce is now looking deep into the remittance sector, baffled by the absence of money transfer companies to Korea despite the existing market in the Commonwealth for such a service. Commerce officials have, in fact, inquired about an advertisement about a remittance service to Korea that reportedly appeared in a Korean newspaper that circulates locally. Officials from the Commerce disclosed that they have already interrogated the company that placed the Korean language-printed advertisement in the paper. The *Saipan Tribune* was told of the name of the Korean company, which is a household name on Saipan, but decided to withhold its identity on ground that it has reportedly started applying for a license to offer remittance services.

FHB denies receiving Mayor Flores' \$200,000 TCD

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

First Hawaiian Bank has denied that it received Saipan Mayor Donald G. Flores' \$200,000, the amount that he claims he purchased in 1993 for a certificate of deposit from the defunct Union Bank.

Attorney Richard L. Johnson, counsel for FHB, said the bank twice wrote to Flores' counsel denying that it ever received his \$200,000.

In arguments to dismiss Flores' lawsuit, Johnson said that Rene Chinen, then FHB vice president and a member of the in-house legal department, wrote a letter on Aug. 25, 2009, to then Flores' counsel, Jesus Borja.

In that letter, Johnson said, Chinen advised Borja that the "trial balance" report for all Union Bank of California accounts transferred from Union Bank to FHB showed only a

checking account for Flores, not a certificate of deposit.

Johnson said that in a subsequent letter dated July 13, 2011, to Flores' current counsel, Juan T. Lizama, Chinen, now a senior vice president at FHB, again explained that the certificate of deposit was not in the report, meaning that FHB did not purchase the account from Union Bank.

The FHB lawyer said that all Flores knows is that he purchased a one month certificate of deposit in 1993, and that neither Union nor First Hawaiian have given him any money for it.

Johnson said that Flores does not know whether the certificate of deposit was included in the sale of Union's assets for First Hawaiian in 2001 or which bank now "has his money," though FHB has advised him at least twice that it did not purchase his account from Union and even offered to provide information to Union

that would show this issue is between Union and Flores.

"From these facts, [Flores] has concocted against First Hawaiian claims of breach of contract, unjust enrichment, negligence, breach of fiduciary duty and fraud," the lawyer said.

Flores states in his complaint that he understood that the certificate of deposit would automatically be renewed by Union and that he planned to allow it to be renewed as a long term investment.

Johnson said it is common knowledge that the interest rate on certificates of deposit generally increases with the length of the term of the certificate.

"If, as he states in his complaint, he purchased the CD as a long term investment to be rolled over, month after month, year after year, it is not plausible that plaintiff would have purchased a CD that matured in 32 days," the lawyer noted.

Instead, Johnson said, any

reasonable person purchasing a certificate of deposit as a long term investment would have purchased a CD with a longer maturity rate.

"The allegation that plaintiff purchased a 32-day TCD for that purpose is not plausible," the lawyer added.

Flores is suing Union Bank of California and FHB.

In his complaint, Flores said that he purchased the CD in the principal amount of \$200,000 that was issued in his name by the Saipan branch of Union Bank on Sept. 10, 1993. Lizama said his client kept the issued certificate with the intent of eventually redeeming it.

On Nov. 15, 2001, Union Bank sold all assets and liabil-

ities of its Saipan branch office to FHB.

Flores, through Lizama, asserted that the record of his time certificate of deposit could not have disappeared without any negligence or its intentional destruction.

Union Bank of California had joined FHB's motion to dismiss Flores' lawsuit.

Drunk man allegedly chokes wife

An intoxicated man allegedly choked his wife in front of their 5-year-old daughter at their residence in Susupe over the weekend.

Abelardo Miranda Magno, 33, was arrested for assault and battery, and disturbing the peace. He was taken to the Superior Court for bail hearing on Monday afternoon. A \$1,250

cash bail was initially imposed for his temporary liberty.

Police reports state that a police officer responded to Susupe on Saturday at 5:32pm after receiving a call about a domestic violence incident. The victim told the officer that Magno pushed her head and choked her in front of their daughter.

At the time, the girl was cry-

ing and allegedly told the officer that her father pushed and choked her mother.

The wife managed to get away and run to the neighbors to call for police's help.

The wife said that Magno also punched her before in the face, but she never reported the matter to police. **(Ferdie de la Torre)**

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

USCIS creates e-mailbox for CNMI

The California Service Center has created a new e-mailbox for the CNMI. This mailbox may be used by the public for any questions that relate to the CNMI, including the CW program. The mailbox will be monitored by customer service personnel and fully supported by USCIS staff members who are familiar with CNMI issues. **(PR)**

Learn how to cook bunelus dagu, eskabechi

The Inetnon Amot yan Kuttur-an Natibu/Mwiischil Safey me Kkoor Aramasal Faluw is offering free lessons to Chamorros and Carolinians on making *bunelos dagu* and *eskabechi* at the Saipan Chamorro-Carolinian Village Cultural Centers Headquarters (1213 Capital Hill Road, across the Workforce Investment Agency and next to the CNMI Board of Parole Office) this Saturday, Dec. 10, 2011. The lessons will be from 9:30am to 12pm.

These activities are offered by the Association of Native Medicine and Culture, in partnership with the Indigenous Affairs Office (Saipan) and funded in part by the Administration for Native Americans. For more information, call 322-0278. **(PR)**

Free Tinian training on selling internationally

John Holman, director of the Pacific Islands Hawaii Export Assistance Center, will be conducting a free workshop today, Dec. 8, 2011, on how Tinian businesses can sell internationally. The seminar, which will be held at the Tinian Public Library, from 9am to 11am, and will cover current trends, opportunities, and resources

available to exporters. Contact Phillip Mendiola-Long at the Tinian Chamber of Commerce at 433-2664 or email registration@TinianChamber.com to register for the event.

Pacific Islands Hawaii Export Assistance Center is a division of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Commercial Services. The mission of the Commercial Service is to assist local companies in selling their products or services in international markets. **(PR)**

Rev & Tax to conduct workshop for employers

The Division of Revenue and Taxation, Department of Finance will be conducting a

workshop for the Annual Wage and Salary Statement, Form (W-2CM) for tax year 2011 and other 2011 year-end filing requirements. The workshop will be on Thursday, Dec. 15, 2011. The first seminar will be from 8am to 11am and the second session will be from 1pm to 4pm at the Department of Public Lands conference room in the Joeten Dandan Commercial Center. Businesses, employers, and all payroll service companies are encouraged to attend. Confirm your attendance by calling the administration office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation at 664-1000 or via fax at 664-1015. **(PR)**

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Don't retreat from freedoms

With a reckless course charted on antiterrorism policies that would threaten fundamental American freedoms, the Senate is acting as if the smoke were still rising from the ruins of the fallen World Trade Center towers.

Broad provisions approved by the Senate last week called for the military, and not civilian authorities, to hold anyone suspected of terrorist involvement—whether U.S. citizen or a foreign national.

Terrorism suspects could be detained indefinitely and without trial. And the door would all but be slammed shut on President Obama's hope of honoring democratic ideals by trying as many terrorism suspects as possible in civilian courts.

The shutdown of the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, detention camp would also be less likely than ever, assuring that it remains an embarrassing symbol of waterboarding, "rendition" kidnappings, and secret overseas prisons.

That kind of lock-'em-up-and-throw-away-the-key approach was understandable in the grim days just after the shock and pain of the nation's worst terrorist attacks. But not now. Osama bin Laden is dead. Al-Qaida's leadership ranks have been thinned. The Iraq campaign is over, and the pullback of U.S. troops from Afghanistan is on the horizon.

Rather than codify the nation's retreat from human-rights standards during the initial hunt for al-Qaida, now is the time to recalibrate antiterrorism efforts to ensure such excesses are avoided.

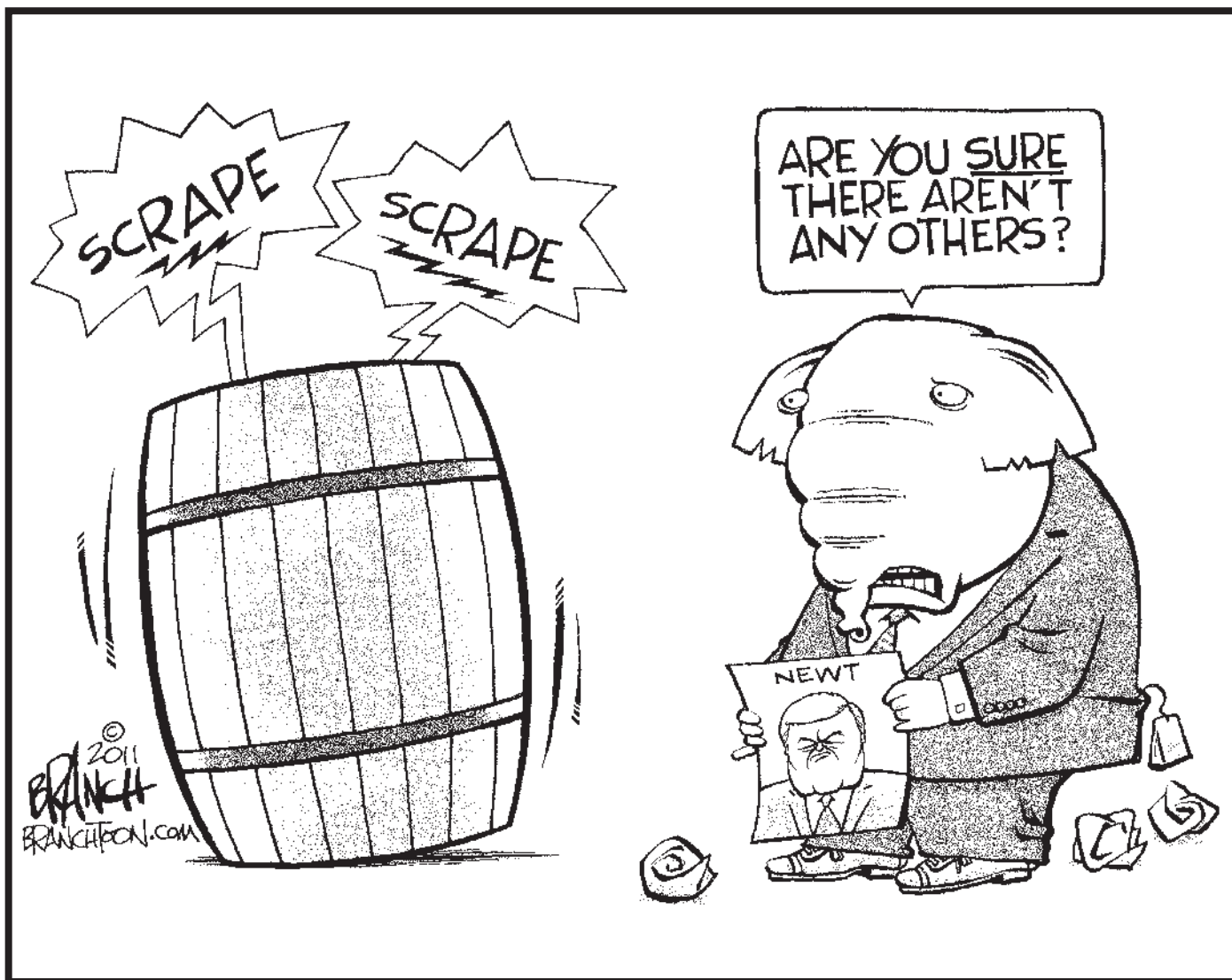
Certainly, the president is right to threaten a veto of the defense appropriations bill if it contains the antiterrorism provisions that mandate military trials for all domestic terrorism suspects. His hands should not be tied to prevent bringing suspected terrorists to justice in the federal court system, particularly since the civilian courts have already proven they are up to the task.

From the perspective of average Americans, their security might be weakened by the government's indefinite detention of foreign terrorism suspects, which would motivate their supporters to act. In fact, security experts say expanding the military's right to detain anyone could hurt the nation's antiterrorism efforts. Other countries might be reluctant to share counterterrorism intelligence if it could be used to lock suspects away for years without charging them with a crime.

The White House should stand firm against the detention proposals, which it said "would be inconsistent with the fundamental American principle that our military does not patrol our streets." As Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., said in her failed effort to block the misguided Senate measure, Washington "should not have the ability to lock away its citizens for years and perhaps decades without charging them."

Even amid the threat from al-Qaida, core freedoms must prevail.

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Feeding an anorexic business

When Janel and I went to a restaurant where we regularly eat, we were informed that the buffet salad bar was no longer available, yet the prices were still the same. What was once a busy place located in a tourist district now has only one worker in the front and very few customers when we've visited. It is just another example of how many businesses are dealing with shrinking sales by slashing their costs and at the same time reducing the value their customers receive.

It's amazing how many organizations practice "business anorexia" as their primary strategy to deal with the downturn in the economy. This describes the extreme financial "starvation" that organizations put themselves through, and that weakens their ability to compete. If continued, it creates a downward spiral that causes a business to go through these steps: 1) Rising prices and a weakened economy prompts cost-cutting measures because it provides immediate relief on the bottom line; 2) lowering costs means stretching out the resources and cutting investment for long-term growth, and possibly laying off employees; 3) this leads to a demoralized workforce that spends more time worrying about their jobs rather than focusing on the customers; 4) the organization develops an internal focus and disconnection with the customer; 5) which impacts the customer's experience negatively and causes them to shop around for other options; 6) which reduces sales, and 7) causes the organization to operate on paper-thin margins or at a loss; 8) which leads to further cost cutting...and so the cycle continues until the business eventually collapses.

To avoid this sickly cycle, it's best to interrupt the pattern by starting at the earliest point in the process, which is using knee-jerk, tactical cost-cutting measures. All costs can be divided into two major categories: tactical and strategic. Tactical costs are useful to operate a business, but they don't clearly bring in more revenue. This would include all assets and activities that maintain the status quo, such as administrative costs of all types, and some costs associated with manufacturing or service operations. It also includes discretionary costs, which cannot be traced to a specific increase in profitability on the bottom line.

Strategic costs, on the other hand, are those assets and activities that grow the business and directly create greater value for the customer and business. Focusing on those costs will yield a greater return on costs over time with an ultimate outcome of profit improvement versus just cost cutting. The businesses that survive and prosper during tough economic times are those that actually outspend their competition on strategic costs, as a percentage of revenue; while reducing their tactical costs as much as possible.

For example, if you have a lead generation program that has proven to bring in \$1,000 of profit for every \$500 you spend; it would be ludicrous to cut your costs for this program because you'll

By RIK VILLEGAS
Special to the Tribune

Rik coaches businesses through their most challenging transition points to develop consistently profitable businesses that operate without them. He can be contacted at RikVillegas@gmail.com, and you can comment on this article at <http://rikv.blogspot.com>.



realize an equivalent reduction in profits. Instead, you should increase your spending for this cost if you continue to see the same percentage improvement in profits, even if it means you have to borrow the money.

Before cutting a single penny, your business should be able to answer these questions: What business are you in? What are your prioritized and agreed upon goals and objectives to maximize your purpose? What are the criteria that will be used to measure each asset and activity and guide you in your decisions to improve your profit?

Your company must analyze and justify all of your costs and develop an overall strategy that outlines your profit improvement philosophy and practices. You should understand these three best practices in order to reverse the downward spiral: First, you must know what you do best or better than any other business; second, your business must hire the best people who love doing what they do best; and third, you must thoroughly understand and deliver what your best customers value. The intersection of these three areas will create a significant differentiating factor for your business and cause it to become the obvious choice. Let's look at these three dynamic aspects in more detail.

First, know what you do best—and become even better at doing it. Be creative and innovative so that you can continue to improve. Monitor your competition to know what they offer to their customers. Do some research or visit businesses similar to yours when you travel, and take notes from your visits. Sam Walton of Wal-Mart was constantly looking for better ways to do what Wal-Mart did best. He would visit his numerous stores and take notes; visit the competition and take notes, then implement the best ideas throughout the stores. It can sometimes be a mistake to expand your product or service offering too far, and thus dilute your core competencies.

When you fully understand what you do best, it's important to find and hire people who love doing what you do best. The Container Store has been ranked the number one business to work for, and their philosophy is that one great employee is worth three good employees, three good employees are worth three average employees.

See FEEDING on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Letter to the Editor**Attitude toward politics needs to change**

Good day, Mr. Brooks. Time for a little verbal jousting! I pretty much took your letter at face value. My letter had quite a few tongue-in-cheek sarcasms. Case in point: my retiree money comment. I know more than a few people were amused by my letter while sadly agreeing with it. First of all I don't need to know anything about you, who you've shook hands with, had your picture taken with or how many books you've written. Your education notwithstanding, your blinders were on in regards to issues you addressed in the CNMI when you took one small part of an entire economy and assigned a very large amount of blame. No need to understand you or Economics 101 to find your meaning in that. You threw some good ideas out there, but you have to remember, no one on the Hill is listening. It's how things are done on Saipan.

You use Hawaii as an economic point—Hawaii's real estate bubble has grown and popped many times and will keep repeating itself. When the Japanese economy died in early 1997, Hawaii later reaped the benefit of getting a lot of that real estate back from the Japanese at pennies on the dollar. The current bubble is now largely driven by rich folks from the mainland (thanks to the Internet) who are playing the same absentee landlord game the Japanese did and are buying up properties left and right, holding them while waiting for the bubble to grow. It'll pop soon enough; it always does.

Don't see how it applies to Saipan. The real estate game in the Commonwealth is basically nonexistent. Article 12: You think it helps or protects the CNMI economy in any way? Ask a realtor on Saipan his opinion. Imagine how much money would be in the CNMI if you or I or any American citizen could own land and pass it on to our children. You can be sure; I'd probably still be there now, spending my money along with many others. Do you know how many folks packed up and left or changed their minds about settling down in the CNMI once they enacted Article 12 (retroactively at that)? As it is, I'll be retiring on Saipan at a point in my life when I couldn't care less if I own a piece of property. Can you imagine a large scale retirement community pouring money into the CNMI? Many folks have given it very serious thought—for Japanese, Chinese, Korean and American retirees. But you can bet Article 12 is the No. 1 issue that brings negotiations to a screeching halt when everyone puts their cards on the table.

And using the Philippines as an economic analogy? Really? The Marcoses raped and pillaged their country, plain and simple. There wasn't any form of economics, British, American or otherwise, involved in solving or explaining that equation. They took the checks Ronny Raygun sent to the Philippines to fight communists and deposited them directly into their bank accounts. It was just theft on an insanely massive scale—sort of like Wall Street and Corporate America nowadays.

I'm not sure but I'll hazard a guess that you haven't been on the islands very long. There are a great many aspects to Saipan life that you will enjoy learning about and might take awhile to understand. I grew up in an island culture. I lived on Saipan for 11 years, started my family there. My kids and I call it *home*. Many locals won't take the low salary when they have Mom, Dad, brother or sister making the inflated government wage with all the attached benefits. Many are waiting until they can get a government job. Do you blame them? I don't. They're not stupid or lazy; it's just how it is.

Again, I don't know how long you've been on Saipan or how familiar you are with island culture, but there is a big keeping-up-with-the-Joneses attitude in the CNMI. Where else in the world will

you find a man with a wife and three kids living in a tin house and driving a fully loaded Camry? It's for keeping up appearances. That is not a racist statement, just fact.

Take that \$5.05 an hour job? I'll put my money where my mouth is: I have. Been there, done that, got the t-shirt to show for it. I started at Hyatt in 1992 at \$4.20 an hour, when the minimum wage was \$2.15. My wife and I raised three kids on Saipan with, at most, a combined salary of maybe \$10 to \$11 an hour. We survived—thrived actually. We bought cars, took long vacations, spent our money locally, etc. Sent a lot overseas, too. That was the wage offered—you took it or starve.

I put Hitler (the Holocaust) and George Bush (Iraq, WMD, terrorists) in the same sentence because they are both guilty of doing the same thing: They created a fictional enemy for everyone to fear and place the blame for our societal ills. That, in turn, allowed them to take over our lives and take away our rights. You and Uncle Ben were doing your best to make aliens and immigrants seem like the enemy—shame on you—obviously your wife-to-be is an immigrant. I can bet your fiancée is sending money out of the CNMI to her family overseas.

Was my letter negative? Yes. It was. It also called for positive change. If you truly call the CNMI home, you'd probably feel the same way I do—I know many, many of my friends on Saipan feel the same way I do. It breaks our hearts that the CNMI, *a part of America*, is being run into the ground by so many corrupt and self-serving clowns. I also have many friends from the islands who live here in the mainland and they would love nothing more than to be able to go back home, me included—if and when the economy is no longer in the pits. Do you know how many fine people have left the CNMI to seek greener pastures in the mainland because they can't afford to live in their *birthplace*? The CNMI is the *only* place in America to have its population *shrink* (indigenous population), since the last Census. You can look it up.

This also brings up another Article 12 point: The folks who have left, they want to sell their land because they have permanently relocated to the mainland, but are being forced by Article 12 to sell to a local who, by the way, doesn't have any money these days (unless he or she is an overpaid government official and they're not buying either) because the local economy is in the toilet. No need for a degree in economics to see how that's not helping the economy.

You also say the CNMI needs to produce to have a viable economy. Taken into account the Jones Act? (That's another one you can blame on the U.S. government) As for calling the voters inept, your words, not mine. My words for local voters are much stronger and a majority of folks will agree with me. Been around long enough for a CNMI election, Mr. Brooks? If not, you are in for a treat. On the islands, or any island culture for that matter, voting tends to go along family lines. It's who you're related to, not who is best for the job that get elected into office. Island folks tend to vote for candidates who are more like themselves rather than who is smartest or most able to get the job done. And that is not a derogatory comment; just stating common facts. Ask any number of locals, they will quite unashamedly tell you, "Yeah, I voted for my uncle, auntie, cousin, etc..." Families are so tight on the islands that currently, getting them to vote for someone other than a member of the family is highly unlikely to happen. This tight family connection, on one hand, is a great and wonderful thing. Mainland America could learn a lot from it. On the other hand, well, you know...can't be very easy for them either, what with the Commonwealth being such a small

town and all.

Also, votes are bought in the simplest of ways on the islands. Why do you think the politicians in the CNMI each gave themselves such large discretionary funds? It's for election time! It's for paying power bills, beer for parties, tent and picnic table rental, etc. Case in point: A candidate who will remain unnamed, although everyone who reads this will know exactly who I am talking about, ran around Saipan giving out \$10 gas vouchers in the days right before an election. It's how things are done on Saipan. I voted every chance I had while living in the CNMI, even though the choices were very limited each election. You tell me to run for office in the CNMI, I would but I am a realist. (I will ask my Saipan friends at this point to stop laughing) There are many, many fine folks in the CNMI who should run for office but won't because they and their supporters know and understand they will not get elected because of the current voter mentality.

I never put any blame on the U.S. government for the CNMI's problems. Sure, they failed when they gave billions to the CNMI with no guidance, checks, or balances, but that was it. No more blaming other folks—plain and simple. I put the blame for the CNMI economical woes directly on the folks running the show. Not the folks who are affected by it. Because the folks running the show *aren't the ones affected by their own decisions*! They voted to give themselves huge stipends—Tinian and Rota officials with \$5,000 a month in stipends?—that they don't have to show any accountability for. Seriously, why does a senator in the CNMI need that much? How much are their housing allowances, etc., and that famous discretionary fund they all hang on to so dearly.

The regular government worker in the CNMI is the one who has gone without due to the payless paydays. At this point it doesn't matter that they are possibly making triple the income of the private sector when you don't get paid. Shouldn't the folks who caused/failed to fix, the economic collapse be the ones to take a payless payday first? Add up all their perks and see how much they are taking home per month. I doubt they are so low on funds that *they* can't make their rent, pay power bills, and buy groceries, unlike the rank and file in the CNMI government. The rank and file will be ignored by those on the Hill. Why? Because that's how things are done on Saipan. If you got the meaning of my letter, it's that how things are done on Saipan game the CNMI political machine and that has to come to an end. I know the people of the CNMI are tired of the game, too, but what can they do? If your *man'amko* are telling you to vote for your uncle, well, then, you vote for your uncle.

The island attitude toward politics needs to change. Change will obviously move at the pace of the islands. The CNMI, if it is to continue growing and becoming a better place to make a living and support a family, has to change. If the CNMI politicians can't get their act together, Uncle Sam will eventually step in, take over everything and the Commonwealth will end up like Guam, American Samoa, and Puerto Rico. The last thing the CNMI needs is the feds showing up in *full force*. Having Homeland Security firmly entrenched there is bad enough. As for thinking I'm racist, if you knew me, you'd know how far that is from the truth. I was raised in Hawaii and we call anyone older than ourselves Auntie or Uncle. The same goes for Saipan. Trust me, you wouldn't want me to tell what I really think of Uncle Ben in a newspaper.

Paul H. Beebe
Spokane, Washington

FEEDING

From Page 10

ees, and one average employee is worth three lousy employees. Therefore one great employee is worth 27 lousy employees—and they'll be a profit center for your business.

Nordstrom's number one customer service strategy was to be meticulous about hiring the right people and then training them to sell—not hiring good salespeople and training them to be nice. You need to find people who genuinely like working and serving your customers, and who make customers feel important and valued. Nordstrom's philosophy is to "hire the smile, train the skill."

I've worked with several organizations that are very careful about who they hire. Whenever they meet someone working at another business that has great customer service skills, they will make a note about that person and if a position opens up, they will invite him or her to apply. What do you do if you have people who don't appear to love doing what you do best and are not good working with your customers? If you've tried to coach and train them to become better customer service reps, then you might need to find other work for them, possibly in a support role.

The third factor is perhaps the most important. You have to identify your best customers and deliver what they truly value. This process requires a mental shift from being transaction-oriented to becoming more customer outcome focused. Customers don't just buy goods and services; they buy what those products

do for them, or the outcome they expect. If you can understand that outcome and exceed their expectations, then you will be able to deliver greater value to them, which will develop greater customer loyalty.

Once these three factors are operating within your business, you will be able to reverse the downward spiral and instead of cutting costs, you'll have the additional revenue to train your staff, create greater job security and allow them to focus on your customers by providing the resources they need to fully serve them. When your customers feel like they are getting greater value from your business, it will differentiate your business from the numerous competitors who sell similar goods or services, and it will cure business anorexia by allowing you to have an organization that is well-fed from the growing sales of customers.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly sunny with scattered showers in the morning, then isolated showers in the afternoon. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲85 ▼78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86 ▼76
Yap	Showers	▲87 ▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲86 ▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85 ▼76
Kosrae	Showers	▲85 ▼76
Majuro	Showers	▲84 ▼80

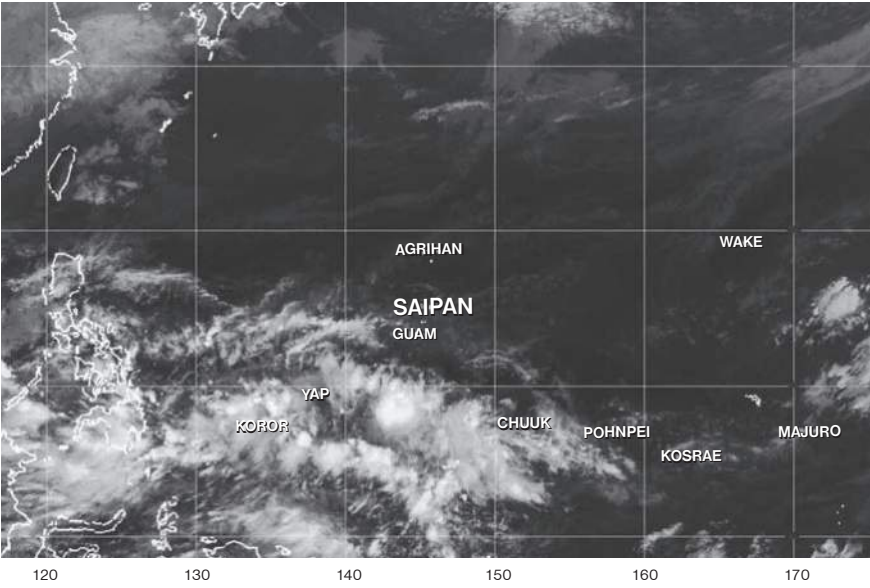
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲71 ▼58
Beijing	Sunny	▲31 ▼17
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲61 ▼55
Honolulu	Sunny	▲81 ▼72
London	Sunny	▲45 ▼36
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲61 ▼42
Manila	Thundershowers	▲82 ▼75
Melbourne	Thundershowers	▲83 ▼63
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲78 ▼69
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲46 ▼32
Osaka	Showers	▲50 ▼40
Paris	Showers	▲47 ▼39
Pusan	Sunny	▲44 ▼32
Rome	Showers	▲64 ▼50
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲46 ▼29
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲58 ▼45
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲33 ▼25
Tokyo	Showers	▲48 ▼38
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲43 ▼33

Tides

Saipan Harbor				
12:13 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet	
7:12 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet	
12:17 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet	
5:20 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet	

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2011
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from just south of the Philippines across 3N130E to end southwest of Chuuk near 3N148E. Low-level convergence associated with the trough is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms from across Palau and Yap to near Chuuk between the equator and 11N from 130E to 154E. A weak shear line extends southwestward from 25N152E across 20N130E. Clouds and patchy rain are along and up to 150 miles north of this shear line. Another weak shear line runs southwestward from 17N156E to near Rota at 14N145E then westward to end near 12N130E. Cloudiness and widely scattered showers are found along and up to 100 miles north of this shear line. An upper-level low centered north of Majuro at 12N172E is triggering widely scattered showers and a few thunderstorms northeast of Majuro between 8N and 17N from 171E to 177E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:31 AM	5:46 PM
Friday	6:31 AM	5:47 PM
Saturday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Sunday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Monday	6:33 AM	5:48 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:54 PM	4:14 AM
Friday	4:40 PM	5:05 AM
Saturday	5:30 PM	5:57 AM
Sunday	6:22 PM	6:48 AM
Monday	7:16 PM	7:39 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2011

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)				ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5	C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)				ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5	C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05070	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP	C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7	C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily	C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7	C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6	C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6	C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL287	6:00am	8:35am	Daily	DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL297	4:35pm	7:20pm	Daily	DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily	OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7	OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)				GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6	3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN	OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
				C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM	C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM				
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM	C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
				C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau	C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN				
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM				
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM				
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN	OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	1, 2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
C05076/179	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM	OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN				
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana				ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)			

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Schools, charities team up for Yap robotics project

Yap State's two private high schools have announced an innovative new program to serve students with an interest in math and computers.

The schools, Yap SDA and Yap Catholic, are each establishing robotics teams for their pupils. These student teams, with support from teachers and other school staffers, will design, build, and operate basic robots. The long-term goal

is for each school to create a robot capable of completing a basic obstacle course at a public demonstration.

Both teams have been equipped with classroom robotics kits from Vex Robotics, an American firm that creates the components for elementary and high school level robots. The Habel Outer Island Education Fund donated the kits along with teacher guides

and the equipment required for using desktop computers to program the robots.

Another charity, the Yap-based "Wagey" is providing the schools with on-the-ground support as they assemble the kits and organize their teams. Wagey will work as a link between the two schools on Yap and robotics teams at high schools in the United States who've offered to provide technical advice and

problem solving.

"This project robot is really interesting," said Kalahao Fillmed, a student at the SDA School who plans to participate in the project. "It's gonna be fun!"

Habele purchased the kits in

late October and they reached Yap in mid-November.

The donation marks a significant expansion for Habel. The group is better known in Micronesia for its annual K-12 tuition scholarships, a program to help low-income

families send their children to non-public schools. Habel was founded by former Peace Corps Volunteers and has been providing scholarships and donating materials to public schools and libraries since 2006. **(PR)**

Baleto wins bank's Christmas card contest

» Second and third placers both from Saipan

HAGATNA, Guam—Bank of Guam selected Jose Rios 7th grader Jordan Baleto's Christmas Card entry to be the cover of their 2011 Christmas Card. Baleto wins \$250 and a gift

basket of school supplies. Selecting from 800 entries, this is Bank of Guam's 5th annual competition for their Christmas card which is sent to 3,500 customers.

The other winners are both from Saipan. Patrick L. Agustín from Hopwood Jr. High School won second place in the contest, while Angel Salazar from William S. Reyes Elementary School won third place. **(BOG)**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Taunya Durrant-Baleto, mother; Cecil John Baleto, father; Jordan Baleto, winner; William D. Leon Guerrero, Bank of Guam executive vice president/chief operating officer and board vice chair; Taylor S. Baleto, sister; and Jackie Marati, Bank of Guam senior vice president/marketing administrator.

Important int'l collaboration with UOG researcher

The value of research conducted at the University of Guam Western Pacific Tropical Research Center is appreciated locally and internationally. WPTRC chemical ecologist and entomologist Gadi V. P. Reddy was recently invited to Okinawa, Japan to give the keynote lecture at a symposium sponsored by the NARO Kyushu Okinawa Agricultural Research Center to discuss strategic studies for the eradication of sweetpotato weevils in infested regions.

Dr. Reddy's studies on the management of sweet potato weevils (*Cylas formicarius*) in Guam are significant in that he is searching for the right formula to control this insect without the use of toxic pesticides. However, in addition to *C. formicarius* there are two other weevil pests (*Euscepes postfasciatus* and *Daealus tuberosus*) causing damage in the field and storage (post-harvest) in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Using Integrated Pest Management techniques with pheromones as lures and pathogens for control of the weevil, Reddy's team is looking to make sweet potato pro-

duction a more viable crop for regional farmers.

"Combining semiochemicals and microbial pests is an environmentally safe alternative to the use of pesticides in controlling weevil infestations," said Reddy.

Reddy's research team conducted trials to determine the best trap size, color and height which allowed them to develop traps containing petri dishes with fungal spores (*Beauveria bassiana* and *Metarhizium anisopliae*) for auto-dissemination into the weevil population, which has been highly effective in Guam and the CNMI.

Scientists attending the conference were very interested in utilizing Reddy's IPM techniques in their home countries. Reddy is also in discussion with Drs. Katsuya Ichinose and Takashi Kuriwada about the possibility of using the sterile male technique to control weevil populations.

"Scientists in Okinawa have effectively used the sterile male technique to eradicate fruit flies, so we thought it may be an effective strategy for controlling sweetpotato weevils in the region," said Reddy.

Ichinose and Kuriwada are planning to visit Guam in March of 2012 to continue this collaborative effort. **(UOG)**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Dr. Katsuya Ichinose, Dr. Hiroyuki Kuba (Japan), Uraporn Nounart (Thailand), Dr. Gadi V.P. Reddy (Guam), and Dr. David R. Hall (UK).



Yap SDA School students open the robotics kit.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

5 Saipan sites red-flagged

The Division of Environment Quality has red-flagged the Central Repair Shop, DPW Channel Bridge, South Puerto Rico Dump, Garapan Fishing Dock, and the Chalan Kanoa District 2 drainage and is ad-

vising the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified.

DEQ said that samples collected from these locations had excessive concentrations of fecal

indicator bacteria (enterococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water. Water samples were taken from 38 locations on Saipan this week. For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. **(DEQ)**

Island Snapshots



MTEC SCHOOL OUTREACH

Students of Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School participate in a discussion about Northern Marianas tourism during a presentation by the Marianas Tourism Education Council on Nov. 15, 2010. The presentation was the first in a planned series of MTEC presentations this school year to public elementary schools.

MVA



Attorney Vince Seman asks Santa Claus for the repeal of Article 12, the land alienation provision of the NMI Constitution, during the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's general membership meeting at Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Rey Perez of Hard Rock Café asks Santa Claus for the release of tax rebate checks.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



A teen sits on Santa Claus's lap and asked for an X-box this Christmas.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Is that Santa Claus' twin brother? No, that's Bud White wishing that Santa Claus would grant his Christmas wish—some \$100,000 in receivables from the CNMI government.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



It's Santa Claus's turn to ask questions.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Northern Marianas College president Sharon Hart's Christmas wish is for students to be able to finish college and be the force to turn the CNMI economy around.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Members of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. board of directors led by Jack Torres, second from left, along with executive officer James E. Phillips, second from right, during a meeting with senators in the Senate chamber on Capital Hill yesterday morning.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Business

Feds: Couple claimed welfare, lived in \$1.2M home

SEATTLE (AP)—A Seattle chiropractor and his wife live in a \$1.2 million waterfront home and have spent the past eight years flying to Moscow, Paris, Israel, Turkey, Mexico and the Dominican Republic.

All the while, federal authorities say, the couple was collecting more than \$100,000 in welfare.

Now, the U.S. attorney's office is suing David Silverstein and Lyudmila Shimonova, accusing them of filing false claims and demanding that the couple pay back more than \$135,000 in federal housing assistance since 2003. Prosecutors are also seeking tens of thousands of dollars in fines.

In gaining Section 8 housing assistance, Shimonova represented that she lived alone with her two children and that her household assets were less than \$5,000. Silverstein received the monthly benefits of \$1,272 as Shimonova's purported landlord, the government said.

Shimonova also received benefits under the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, as well as Social Security cash reserved for people who can't work due to age or disability



In this undated photo provided by the King County Dept. of Assessments, the \$1.2 million waterfront home where prosecutors say a Seattle chiropractor and his wife lived while claiming welfare assistance is seen.

and whose assets fall below a certain threshold—\$3,000 for a married couple or \$2,000 for a single person, the complaint said.

"Defendants have separately and, it appears, in conjunction with one another made false representations to various state and federal agencies in order to obtain federally funded benefits," assistant U.S. attorneys Harold Malkin and Kayla Stahman wrote.

Meanwhile, they were traveling the world, according to Department of Homeland Security records.

Michael Radyshevsky, a federal welfare fraud investigator, wrote in an application to search the couple's home that they took weeklong trips to Moscow in 2003, Dominican Republic in 2005, and Mexico and France in 2009.

House bill to raise Medicare premiums for wealthy

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Republicans intend to propose a gradual increase in Medicare premiums for wealthy seniors to help cover the cost of renewing Social Security payroll tax cuts and benefits for the long-term unemployed, officials said Wednesday.

The precise details remain to be worked out as the leadership consults with rank-and-file Republicans about the legislation, which has grown significantly in recent days and is expected on the House floor next week.

GOP officials described the plan on condition of anonymity because no final decision has been made.

In addition to the extension of payroll tax cuts and jobless benefits that are at the heart

of President Barack Obama's jobs program, House Republicans plan to include a provision to avert a 27 percent cut in payments to doctors who treat Medicare patients. All three face a Dec. 31 deadline for action.

In addition, GOP leaders eager to attract votes for the measure are likely to include conservative-backed provisions to speed the construction of a controversial oil pipeline from Canada to Texas and block a proposed Environmental Protection Agency rule restricting toxic emissions from industrial boilers.

Across the Capitol, Democrats set the stage for a second politically charged vote in the Senate later in the week on their proposed surtax on mil-

lion-dollar earners to help pay for the renewal of the tax cuts and unemployment benefits.

Senate Republicans blocked an earlier bill along the same lines, and the Democrats' decision to call for a second showdown comes as they seek to brand GOP lawmakers as protectors of the rich at the expense of the middle class.

The move is "nothing more than another bill that's been designed to fail, so Democrats can have another week of fun and games on the Senate floor while tens of millions of working Americans go another week wondering whether they're going to see a smaller paycheck at the end of the year," said Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky.

that it reached a tentative deal following secret talks initiated by the company. If workers ratify the pact, as expected, the Machinists say they'll drop their National Labor Relations Board complaint over Boeing's decision to open a nonunion plant in South Carolina.

Oil hovers above \$101 amid mixed US supply report

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices hovered above \$101 a barrel Wednesday in Asia after a crude supply report showed mixed signs about U.S. demand strength. Benchmark crude for January delivery was up 20 cents to \$101.48 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract rose 29 cents to settle at \$101.28 on Tuesday. In London, Brent crude was steady at \$110.81 on the ICE futures exchange.

Nation

Obama sets campaign theme: Middle class at stake

OSAWATOMIE, Kan. (AP)—Declaring the American middle class in jeopardy, President Barack Obama on Tuesday outlined a populist economic vision that will drive his re-election bid, insisting the United States must reclaim its standing as a country in which everyone can prosper if provided "a fair shot and a fair share."

While never making an overt plea for a second term, Obama's offered his most comprehensive lines of attack against the candidates seeking to take his job,

only a month before Republican voters begin choosing a presidential nominee. He also sought to inject some of the long-overshadowed hope that energized his 2008 campaign, saying: "I believe America is on its way up."

In small-town Osawatimie, in a high school gym where patriotic bunting lined the bleach-

ers, Obama presented himself as the one fighting for shared sacrifice and success against those who would gut government and let people fend for themselves. He did so knowing the nation is riven over the question of whether economic opportunity for all is evaporating.

"Throughout the country, it's sparked protests and political movements, from the tea party to the people who've been occupying the streets of New York and other cities," Obama said.

"This is the defining issue of our time," he said in echoing President Theodore Roosevelt's famous speech here in 1910.

"This is a make-or-break moment for the middle class and all those who are fighting to get into the middle class," Obama said. "At stake is whether this will be a country where working people can earn enough to raise a family, build

a modest savings, own a home and secure their retirement."

For Obama, saddled with a weak national economic recovery, the speech was a chance to break away from Washington's incremental battles and his own small-scale executive actions. He offered a sweeping indictment of economic inequality and unleashed his own brand of prairie populism.

He spoke for nearly an hour to a supportive audience, reselling his ideas under the framework of "building a nation where we're all better off."

Billed as an important address that would put today's economic debates in context, Obama's speech seemed a bit like two packaged into one.

The first was that of the campaigner, full of loft and reclamation of American values. The second was the governing Obama, who recited his familiar jobs agenda, his feud with Congress over extending a Social Security tax cut, even his fight to get his consumer watchdog confirmed.

Allies urge Romney to get tough as Gingrich rises

WASHINGTON (AP)—Mitt Romney's above-the-fray campaign style kept him atop the Republican presidential field for months, but it's raising concerns among his supporters now that Newt Gingrich has surged to challenge him.

Some Romney backers say their candidate must mix it up more aggressively, with Gingrich and with reporters, to prove he has the moxie to be the GOP challenger to President Barack Obama. Romney, the former Massachusetts governor, particularly caused concerns with his prickly responses in a recent Fox News interview. He needs to show more toughness and willingness to field questions, party insiders say.

The message seemed to resonate with his campaign Tuesday. Romney said he will appear on Fox News Sunday on Dec. 18, his first national Sunday talk show in nearly two years. He also fielded questions from reporters covering his Arizona visit, marking his third such "press availability" in four days.

The moves make sense to Rich Galen, a GOP strategist and former Gingrich aide who is neutral in the current race. "The lack of engagement strategy has served Romney pretty well," Galen said. "Now I think they've got to alter course and get him out there more."

Numerous Romney supporters had expressed concern over reports of him dodging reporters and in-depth questioning.

"It remains a mystery why Mitt Romney has done relatively few interviews," Jennifer Rubin, a conservative blogger for The Washington Post who often praises Romney, wrote on Monday. The much-discussed Nov. 29 Fox interview, she said, might have gone better "had it been one of dozens of TV interviews he'd given during the campaign. ... He's been the least interviewed candidate in the race."

In his 15-minute exchange with Fox News' Brett Baier, Romney bristled at questions about his changed views on abortion, climate change, immigration and gay rights, all of which are widely discussed in political circles.

Romney acknowledged rejecting his pro-abortion-rights stand of the 1990s, although he did not explain why. Otherwise, he told Baier, "Your list is just not accurate." Romney suggested the questions were inspired by "Democratic ads" that label him a serial flip-flopper.

Asked about his Massachusetts health initiative, which required residents to obtain medical insurance, Romney said he had answered the question "many hundred times." He added: "This is an unusual interview."

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Citigroup to cut 4,500 jobs, take \$400M charge

NEW YORK (AP)—Citigroup Inc. is eliminating 4,500 jobs in its latest effort to cut costs. The bank will take a \$400 million charge in the fourth quarter as a result. Citigroup's CEO, Vikram Pandit, disclosed the job cuts at an investor conference Tuesday. The cuts represent about 1.5 percent of its global workforce of 267,000. Pandit said the cuts would be made over the next few quarters.

Deal could yield years of labor peace for Boeing

SEATTLE (AP)—Boeing's Machinists union votes Wednesday on a four-year contract extension that would ensure a long stretch of elusive labor peace as the new version of the 737 is built in Washington state. The union announced last week

ACROSS THE NATION

FAA chief resigns after drunken driving arrest

WASHINGTON (AP)—FAA administrator Randy Babbitt resigned Tuesday as head of the Federal Aviation Administration following his arrest over the weekend on charges of drunken driving. Babbitt was about halfway through a five-year term. Deputy FAA Administrator Michael Huerta will serve as acting administrator. Industry officials and lawmakers said they expect Huerta to contin-

ue in the post through next year since the White House probably will want to avoid a possible nomination fight before the presidential election.

Report: Runner whose feet froze left for run upset

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—A campus police report provides new details about why an All-American cross-country runner from the University of Alaska Anchorage spent three days alone in the freezing

woods and had to have his feet amputated, saying he went for a run because he was feeling despondent and passed out under a tree. Marko Cheseto, 28, of Kenya, disappeared from the university Nov. 6. He was suffering from hypothermia and severe frostbite to his feet when he staggered into the lobby of an Anchorage hotel three days later. He was wearing a T-shirt, jeans, two jackets and running shoes, but no hat or gloves. His shoes were frozen to his feet.

Asia

Chinese, US defense officials meet in Beijing

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese and U.S. defense officials met in Beijing on Wednesday for their highest-level contacts since recent frictions over arms sales to Taiwan and plans to strengthen the American military presence in the Pacific.

The 12th round of U.S.-China Defense Consultative Talks are a barometer of relations between China's 2.3 million-member People's Liberation Army and the U.S. military that is repositioning itself in the Pacific following the winding down of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

While the Chinese military has lashed out at the recent U.S. moves, Beijing's decision to proceed with the talks appears to show it is placing a new importance on regular talks between the sides, even as their rivalry sharpens.

Lead Chinese delegate Gen. Ma Xiaotian said going ahead with the meeting shows both sides are committed to improving relations.

"We attach great to this plat-

form to enhance communication, to expand common ground, to promote mutual understanding, to manage and control risks and to avoid miscalculation, this maintaining the stability of our military-to-military relationship," Ma, the People's Liberation Army's deputy chief of staff, said in opening remarks at the hulking Defense Ministry in downtown Beijing.

Representing the U.S., Defense Undersecretary Michele Flournoy said next year would be a "very significant" year for relations and "it's very important to cooperate on a number of issues that impact both of our countries," apparently referring to a looming political leadership transition in China and the U.S. presidential election.

Neither official referred to the Taiwan arms sale. Beijing says the self-ruled island is Chinese territory to be recovered by military force if necessary.

China summoned the U.S. ambassador and warned of damage to relations following

an announcement in September of a decision to offer Taiwan the \$5.85 billion package to upgrade the island's F-16 fleet.

In the weeks that followed, it postponed a visit by the U.S. Army Band and Adm. Robert Willard, head of the U.S. Pacific Command, along with joint anti-piracy exercises and a military medical exchange, scholars Bonnie Glaser and Brittany Billingsley said in an analysis for the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

China's decision to proceed with the talks, however, appears to show that Beijing has "accepted that suspending overall bilateral military ties does not serve U.S. and Chinese interests," Glaser and Billingsley said, warning also that it wasn't clear yet whether the Chinese side is willing to restore the full range of military-to-military contacts.

Besides the U.S. military sales to Taiwan, China is also expected to complain about U.S. military surveillance missions within China's Exclusive Economic Zone.

Carnage in Kabul sparks fear of sectarian strife

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—In Afghanistan's first major sectarian assault since the fall of the Taliban regime a decade ago, a suicide bomber slaughtered 56 Shiite worshippers and wounded more than 160 others Tuesday outside a Shiite shrine in the capital.

The body of a woman, clutching a dead child in each arm, was sprawled along a dirt road littered with shoes, bloodstained clothing, hats and body parts after the blast, which took place as a bombing killed four Shiites in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif.

A loudspeaker at the shrine blasted a recitation of the Quran as ambulances with loud sirens rushed in to carry away the dead and wounded. Outside a hospital in Kabul, a man sobbing with other relatives cried out "Mother! My mother!"

The Taliban condemned the attack, which was reminiscent of the wave of sectarian blood-

shed that shook Iraq during the height of the war there. Suspicion centered on militant groups based in neighboring Pakistan where Sunni attacks on minority Shiites are common.

A man who claimed to be from Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, a Pakistan-based group that has carried out attacks against Shiite Muslims, called various media outlets in Pakistan to claim responsibility for the bombing in Kabul. The validity of the claim could not be determined.

Until now, the decade-long Afghan war has largely been spared sectarian violence, where civilians are targeted simply for their membership in a particular religious group. Tuesday's attack suggests that at least some militant groups may have shifted tactics, taking aim at ethnic minorities such as the Hazara who are largely Shiite and support the Afghan government

and its Western partners.

The Afghan Taliban, who are mostly ethnic Pashtuns and nearly all Sunni Muslims, had been attempting to diversify their ranks, expanding to areas outside their southern homeland, recruiting some Tajiks and others and forging an alliance with Uzbek militants in the north in an attempt to present themselves as a national resistance movement.

Unlike some Iraqi militant groups—who consider anybody from the rival community a legitimate target—the Taliban have generally refrained from mass attacks against purely civilian targets. They usually focus instead on the U.S.-led coalition, Afghan forces or government offices, although recently the Taliban have been responsible for a rising number of civilian deaths in smaller attacks, according to a U.N. report.

processions during Ashoura. The government has declared war on the group, but in recent weeks there have been unconfirmed reports of peace talks with at least some factions within the Taliban.

Barber killed over haircut, brother kills suspect

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine authorities say a mentally ill man who fatally stabbed his barber after he was teased about his new haircut has been shot dead inside a jail by the victim's brother. Mayor Alex Centina of central Calinog town says the brother of the slain barber pretended to be bringing food to the detained Benjie Lozada on Tuesday. Then, he shot him in the face in front of Lozada's mother. Lozada had turned himself in last week and confessed to killing the barber and town pastor Charlie Agustino inside his shop after relatives teased him about his haircut. Police said the suspect was taking medication for mental illness.

World

Divisions over EU treaty threaten crisis solution

BERLIN (AP)—Plans by France and Germany to save the euro through closer European unity faced a serious challenge Tuesday from Britain, as deep divisions emerged between the 17 EU nations that use the euro and the 10 others that don't.

Threatened by fears their joint currency may not survive, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicolas Sarkozy had forcefully demanded changes to European Union treaties to tighten controls over spending and borrowing for all who use the embattled euro.

Their comments reinforced market expectations that EU leaders at a Friday summit would finally contain, through

tighter financial rules, the 2-year-old debt crisis that has engulfed the continent and threatens the entire global economy.

Enter David Cameron, the prime minister of Britain, a European nation that does not use the euro, who said he would be heading to the Brussels summit "to defend and promote British interests."

"Eurozone countries do need to come together, do need to do more things together—if they choose to use the European treaty to do that, Britain will be insisting on some safeguards too," he declared Tuesday. "As long as we get those, then that treaty can go ahead. If we can't get those, it won't."

Cameron is the leader of

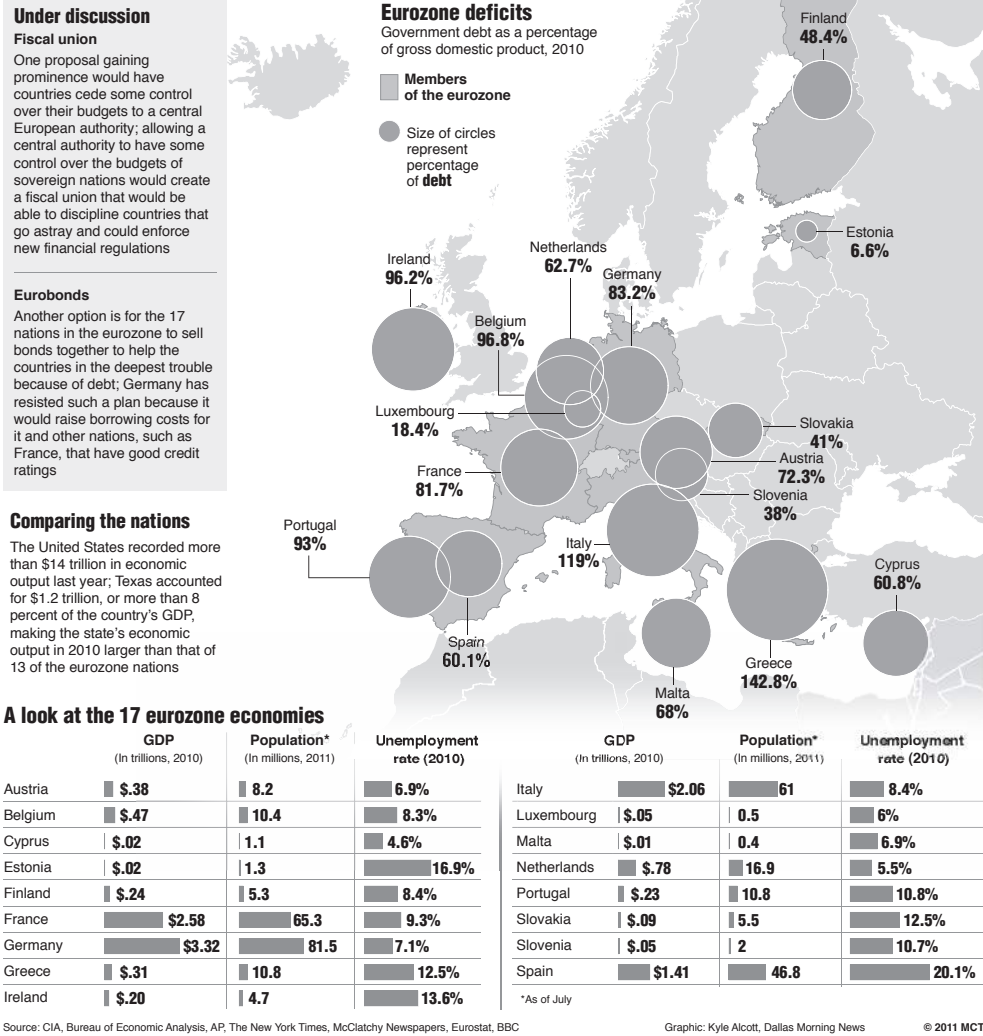
Britain's Conservative party, which resists transferring more sovereign powers to EU institutions in Brussels. Many party members have long wanted to ditch the EU altogether.

On the other hand, Cameron is wary of losing power with the 27-nation bloc if France and Germany create a tighter club of eurozone nations with tough rules for national budgets and automatic sanctions for those who stray.

The safeguards cited by Cameron included the importance of keeping a single EU market of some 500 million consumers and making sure that any eurozone moves don't threaten London's status as a global financial center.

Racing to find a debt crisis solution

European leaders are trying to stop a debt crisis that is threatening to shatter their 12-year-old experiment: a common euro currency. The monetary union has existed since the euro was created in 1999, but the European Union, which includes the 17 euro nations and 10 others that use their own currencies, has no central authority over taxing and spending.



ASIAN BRIEFS

Pakistani president travels to Dubai for tests

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistan's state media says President Asif Ali Zardari has traveled to Dubai to undergo medical tests. The state-run Associated Press of Pakistan quoted the president's personal physician Tuesday as saying the tests are routine and "linked to a previously diagnosed cardiovascular condition." The trip comes as Zardari falls under pressure over a scandal that has forced the Pakistani ambassador to the U.S. to resign.

Pakistani minister thanks Taliban for not bombing

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistan's interior minister thanked the country's Taliban militant movement Tuesday for not staging attacks during this year's Shiite ritual of Ashoura, a remark likely to draw criticism as the country grapples with how to subdue the extremists. The Pakistani Taliban and other Sunni extremist groups have frequently bombed Shiite

WORLD BRIEFS

Sectarian bloodshed worsens in Syria amid uprising

BEIRUT (AP)—Dozens of bodies were dumped in the streets of a Syrian city at the heart of the country's nearly 9-month-old uprising, a grim sign that sectarian bloodshed is escalating as the country descends further toward civil war. The discovery in the streets of Homs came as the United States stepped up pressure Tuesday on the regime of President Bashar Assad to end its crackdown on the anti-government protests. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton met in Geneva with Syrian opposition figures and Washington said it was sending its ambassador back to Damascus. Up to 50 people were killed in Homs on Monday, but details about what happened in Syria's third-largest city only came to light Tuesday with reports of retaliatory attacks pitting mem-

bers of the Alawite sect against Sunnis.

Greek lawmakers approve 2012 austerity budget

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Greece's lawmakers overwhelmingly approved next year's austerity budget early Wednesday, extending tough spending cuts that have already left Greeks struggling as the country tries to slash its vast debts and tame a severe recession. With three parties, including the majority socialists and their rival conservatives, participating in Greece's new coalition government, the budget was passed with a 258-41 majority in the 300-seat Parliament. "This is a difficult budget ... with ambitious targets," Prime Minister Lucas Papademos told lawmakers just before the after-midnight vote. "But we must achieve our targets and implement the measures that are foreseen."

Focus

BAGHDAD (AP)—Burned bodies hanging from a bridge. A boy buried under rubble from a bombing. A father gunned down in front of his 7-year-old daughter. These were some of the harrowing images captured by three Iraqi photographers of The Associated Press who have covered the Iraq war since the U.S.-led invasion of 2003.

Now, as the last American troops prepare to leave their country, the three remember the images that have held the most significance for them.

KHALID MOHAMMED

On a beautiful spring day in 2004, during a ride through Baghdad looking for stories to photograph, my driver and I were changing a flat tire when a phone

As US leaves Iraq, AP men recall a WAR IN PICTURES

By HADI MIZBAN, KARIM KADIM, and KHALID MOHAMMED
ASSOCIATED PRESS



In this March 31, 2004 file photo, Iraqis chant anti-American slogans as charred bodies hang from a bridge over the Euphrates River in Fallujah, west of Baghdad. The photo has a great deal of significance to AP photojournalist Khalid Mohammed.

call came from my office. There had been an attack in Fallujah, 70 kilometers (45 miles) west of the capital. We rushed there.

I had not slept well the night before. My country was engulfed in violence, and I had dreamed of being chased by the ghosts of dead people I had photographed. Now, as we drove into Fallujah, we immediately sensed something was not normal. There were no police in sight. People were closing their shops. Parents were pulling their children out of class early.

I could see a column of smoke coming from the city center, and we drove there. The smell of burning flesh was everywhere. There was blood and black ash where bodies had been dragged on the asphalt. An SUV was on fire. Young people nearby were chanting anti-U.S. slogans.

I asked them what had happened. "They killed them," the kids said. "You can find them hanging at the bridge."

Hanging from the bridge spanning the Euphrates River were the remains of four American private contractors. More young people were gathered there, laughing hysterically and chanting "Death to America!"

"God, I have to document this," I thought, my hands trembling, heart racing.

I used to work in Fallujah all the time, and I recognized many of the faces in the crowd, but this time the atmosphere was different, almost hysterical.

"Come on! Take some photos of this CIA staff! They think they can ride into Fallujah!" someone said to me.

I told my driver to stay in the car with the engine running, and got out to take pictures. But seconds after I started shooting I heard voices—"Who is this photographer? Why is he shooting? Stop!"

Then I heard heavy gunfire from the direction of the bridge as the American troops arrived. I ran back to the car.

It was the first time that I had ever shot pictures of hanging people. I knew this would affect both sides. Even as I was running to the car I heard older people deploring what had happened to the four Americans.

I have been back to Fallujah a few times, and would rather stay away. The smell of burned flesh and the sound of hysterical laughter are still with me.

KARIM KADIM

It was 2008 and I was in Sadr City covering clashes between U.S. forces and Mahdi army militiamen when I heard the sounds of loud explosions from American aerial bombardment and headed in their direction. There were gunmen everywhere, U.S. helicopters above, destroyed buildings and people trying to flee.

I heard a man shouting "My son is still trapped!" He told me he had taken his wounded wife to an ambulance and then returned to his house. Firefighters and residents began searching for the 2-year-old boy. I stayed, wanting to help the man and hoping to get a picture of the child being found alive.

After two hours he was found and carried aloft by rescuers who rushed him to a waiting ambulance. I had my shot but I wanted to follow the story to its conclusion, believing, like the others, that the boy had survived. So I jumped into the ambulance and rode with it to the hospital, where a doctor pronounced him dead. The father was shocked. I too started to cry.

Sadr City was never an easy place for a journalist to work. The Shiite militiamen who controlled the district distrusted us. American forces



In this July 21, 2005 file photo, one of the two daughters of Jalil Shaalan, a security guard at a local school, reacts after her father was gunned down in front of them outside of the school compound by unknown shooters in the Amarayah district of Baghdad. This photo has a great deal of significance to AP photojournalist Hadi Mizban.

surrounded the area and sometimes shelled the gunmen's hideouts, trapping me in the crossfire.

But I kept coming back to the bereaved family, whose destroyed house stood in the same neighborhood as my own. The father was a simple soul who wanted nothing more than to live peacefully with his family, yet his son's life had not been spared.

I gave him a newspaper that had published my photos of the bombing. I wanted somehow to help him. Then, on one of my visits, I found that his home had been rebuilt, and he told me that U.S. forces and local authorities compensated him. Now, all the destroyed houses have been repaired, and the area is much calmer.

HADI MIZBAN

In 2005, while covering parts of western Baghdad and the airport road, I heard a volley of bullets and then saw

two police cars speed by. Arriving at the scene, I found a man lying dead in an empty street, and a little girl sitting cross-legged, staring at him, her clothes blood-soaked, crying "They killed my father." Her name was Ah-daf, and she was 7.

When she saw me, she became terrified and started to cry, thinking I was the killer. I thought of my baby daughter, and I imagined she would do the same thing if I was killed, and I started to cry as well.

Then the dead man's wife arrived, weeping and shouting "You killed him!" I tried to calm her down, telling her I was a journalist who had nothing to do with the killing. I had the feeling that we were being watched by the insurgents. Some people were looking at me from a nearby house. After the body was taken by the police, I was stopped by a man asking if I was related to the dead man and wanting to know why I was crying. I sensed that the man was from al-Qaida. He told me to leave.

I have been back a half-dozen times to visit the family, trying to help put them in touch with a humanitarian organization which saw my photos and wanted to help resettle the family in a safe area. The wife said she would rather use the aid to buy sheep and cattle to earn money for food. On my last visit, in September 2005, a woman told me that I was being watched by al-Qaida people, and I should leave immediately because they would come and kill me. She was very worried.

Each time I visited this family, I used to kiss my sleeping children before leaving the house, knowing that this could be the last time I see them, and my children could be in the same situation as the girl I photographed.

My impression at that time was that the dead man represented Iraq which was dying and the little girl represented a generation that would be haunted by memories of killing and blood. I hope the coming generation will show tolerance and love to each other. It is only with tolerance and love that Iraq can be revived again; with hatred, Iraq can't move one step forward.



In this Tuesday, April 29, 2008 file photo, 2-year-old Ali Hussein is pulled from the rubble of his family's home in the Shiite stronghold of Sadr City in Baghdad, Iraq on Tuesday, April 29, 2008. The child, who later died at the hospital, was in one of four homes destroyed by U.S. missiles.

Environment

Energy awareness campaign generates positive buzz

The Department of Public Works' Energy Division is pleased to inform the public that its 2011 Annual Energy Awareness Month events on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota were successful, receiving positive feedbacks from our communi-

Residents avail of Energy Savings Kits during the campaign conducted by the Department of Public Works' Energy Division at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Building in Susupe. The kits consisted of three Energy Star compact fluorescent light bulbs and other energy saving devices that came in reusable bags.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



ties for promoting and encouraging energy conservation and awareness within the CNMI.

With this year's campaign: "Turn Words into Actions, Turn Actions into Results," the Energy Division managed to reach out to 1,553 residential consumers to provide energy education and conservation awareness through the distribution of Energy Savings Kits from funding made possible through a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy, State Energy Program – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

As a result of the awareness, the Energy Division anticipates

that the 1,553 households that availed of the kits will realize an annual reduction of about 526 kWhrs in energy consumption and annual-cost savings of about \$189.22 per household or a total \$293,852.45 on their energy bill and in turn, further reducing the CNMI's dependence on fossil fuel.

The Energy Awareness Events kicked off on Oct. 18-20, 2011 with a two-day event on Tinian at the Tinian Mayor's Office with 282 of its local residents availing of the Home Energy Savings Kit.

On Oct. 26-27, 2011, the Energy Division reached out to 280 residents who availed of the kits, which took place at the Rota Mayor's Office, while 991 residential consumers on Saipan took the time to visit the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Building in Susupe to avail of the available Home Energy Savings Kits.

At the conclusion of the events on Tinian and Rota, Tinian Mayor

Ramon Dela Cruz and Rota Mayor Melchor Mendiola expressed sincere appreciation to the Energy Division for extending energy conservation programs and assistance to their respective residential consumers.

Saipan resident Donna Liwag also took the time to express her gratitude and appreciation for the Home Energy Savings Kit. She said she is now more energy conscious and looks forward to a reduction in her utility bill when she replaces her incandescent bulbs with Energy Star compact fluorescent light bulbs.

The Home Energy Savings Kits consisted of three Energy Star compact fluorescent light bulbs and other energy saving devices that came in reusable bags.

Thelma B. Inos, director of the Energy Division, is pleased that the community continues to do their part in conserving energy and encourages others to please do the same. (PR)

DO YOUR PART

Don't get trashy this season

By TERRI BENNETT
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

That classic line from the Grinch about Christmas always tugs at my heart this time of year. It's when he realizes the true meaning of the season, "How could it be so? It came without ribbons! It came without tags! It came without packages, boxes, or bags!" But here's the thing — the holidays DO come with all those things and more. In fact, Americans create 25 percent more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day than any other time of year. What kind of gift is that to our planet? It's not a gift I want to give. From parties to presents, there are easy and economical ways to be less trashy this time of year.

Whether you're hosting or attending a holiday party this year, there are smart ideas to cut down on the amount of trash. If you're throwing this year's bash and need extra serving dishes, glasses, or linens — consider renting them. It can be much more cost effective than you think and the best part is that you usually don't have to wash any of it before it gets returned. Also, encourage guests to bring reusable containers to take home extra goodies. Think of how many trash bags you won't be filling with "disposable" plates and cups — not to mention all that leftover food. If you're attending a holiday party, put a little extra thought into what you bring your hosts. A bottle of wine in a reusable wine bag is the perfect gift. Or, you can think about a waste-free gift such as a gift certificate for a massage or a manicure.

When it comes to wrapping

all your presents this year, get creative. Reusing leftover wrapping paper and ribbons from last year is absolutely free. Other free options are old newspapers, construction paper from the kids, or even pretty tissue paper from previous gifts. Now what about those gift bags? I always brag to my friends that I will never buy a gift bag again. I save each one I receive and reuse them throughout the holiday season and throughout the year. Just remember to not write the recipient's name on the actual bag because then it's much harder to get more than one use out of it. Besides, gift bags can be pricey!

Another pricey tradition this time of year is holiday cards. Some people save each one they get in the mail but many folks simply toss them in the trash after the festivities are over. This year, try something new. Holiday e-cards are becoming much more common and they come without all the trash. There are a wide variety of online sites that will help you create the perfect card in any design you can imagine. Visit DoYourPart.com/Columns for some of my favorite e-card sites.

During the hustle and bustle of the season, you can save time and money with a few simple swaps that will also help you Do Your Part to create a whole lot less waste. Happy holidays!

Terri Bennett is a veteran TV meteorologist, author, and founder of DoYourPart, everyday green living ideas that are better for you and the planet. Send questions to terri@doyourpart.com and follow DoYourPart on Facebook and Twitter.

In Loving Memory of GERALD VICTOR SKILANG SABLAN

Fondly known as "Jerry", "Jay", "G"

Born: November 28, 1956
Died: December 4, 2011

In his new life, he now joins:

Father: Juan Atalig Sablan
Brothers: Benigno Skilang Sablan
Henry Skilang Sablan

His love and memories will forever remain in the hearts of his:

Mother: Agnes Skilang Sablan
Wife: Jung Soon P. Sablan
Children: Miso, Roseanna, Christina Marie, William Gerald, Yezhi (Apple), Dae Geon, Dae Hyun, Eyun Ji
Brother: Michael Skilang Sablan (Stephen, Zachary, Adam)
Sisters: Virginia Ann Sablan and Andrew Went (Matthew, Kaela) Catherine and Charles V. Cepeda (Cyji-Charles Pablo)

He will also be missed by numerous uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews and nieces.

Nightly rosaries are prayed at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 7:00 pm.

His remains will be escorted from the Borja Funeral Home to Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 7:30 am on Monday, December 12, 2011. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 10:00 am followed by interment at the CNMI Veteran's Cemetery in Marpi.

Please join us in prayer.

*Thank you, Si Yu'us Maase,
Me Sulang, Kamsahamnida*



Life & Style

Ted Hughes takes his place in Poets' Corner



AP
Seamus Heaney addresses the attendees at the unveiling of the memorial stone (under red cloth) to poet Ted Hughes in the Poets' corner of Westminster Abbey, London Tuesday Dec. 6, 2011, to join a line of great British writers going back to Chaucer.

LONDON (AP)—British poet Ted Hughes was honored Tuesday with a memorial stone in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, joining a line of great British writers going back to Chaucer.

The stone in the abbey floor was placed at the foot of a memorial honoring T.S. Eliot, Hughes' mentor and publisher.

Nobel Prize-winning Irish poet Seamus Heaney unveiled the memorial as some 300 guests—including Hughes' widow Carol and daughter Frieda—looked on.

"I think it's what he deserves, it's his due," Heaney told the BBC ahead of the ceremony. "I think Ted is at home with that company."

Heaney was referring to the 111 writers memorialized in Poets' Corner in the area where Geoffrey Chaucer was buried in 1400—not because he wrote "The Canterbury Tales," but because he was Clerk of the Works at the nearby Palace of Westminster, now almost entirely rebuilt.

Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, Samuel Johnson, Rudyard Kipling, John Masefield and Alfred Lord Tennyson are among the writers buried in the Abbey, and many others including William Blake and P.B. Shelley are memorialized there.

Hughes' stone is inscribed with his name and words from "That Morning," one of his "River" poems: "So we found

the end of our journey / So we stood alive in the river of light / Among the creatures of light, creatures of light."

At the ceremony, Heaney and others took turns reading Hughes' works, including an extract from a letter Hughes wrote to his wife, fellow poet Sylvia Plath, who killed herself in 1963 after they split up. The letter was dated from 1956, four months after the couple married.

Hughes died of cancer in 1998, months after publishing "Birthday Letters," a powerful collection reflecting on the troubled marriage.

Hughes was born Aug. 17, 1930, in the mill town of Mytholmroyd in Yorkshire, northern England.

"Hawk in the Rain," his first volume of poetry published in 1957, immediately established him as one of the most interesting of Britain's young poets. He was appointed Poet Laureate in 1984.

"Birthday Letters" brought Hughes sympathy and a torrent of praise after years of keeping silent about his marriage to Plath.

Hughes described the collection as "a gathering of the occasions—written with no plan over about 25 years—in which I tried to open a direct, private, inner contact with my first wife, not thinking to make a poem, thinking mainly to evoke her presence to myself and to feel her there listening."

Alec Baldwin kicked off LA flight for playing game

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Alec Baldwin says he was kicked off a plane Tuesday at Los Angeles International Airport after having words with a flight attendant over an "addicting" word game he was playing on his cellphone.

The "30 Rock" actor was asked to get off a New York City-bound flight for playing "Words with Friends" while the plane idled at a gate Tuesday, said Baldwin's spokesman, Matthew Hiltzik.

"He loves 'Words with Friends' so much that he was willing to leave a plane for it," said Hiltzik, who added that Baldwin boarded another Amer-



Baldwin

ican Airlines flight to New York.

Baldwin, a prolific Twitter user, took to the social media site to

vent, saying a "flight attendant on American reamed me out 4 playing Words With Friends while we sat at the gate, not moving."

It wasn't clear if passengers had been asked to turn off their cellphones, which is typical before a flight backs away from the terminal.

American Airlines spokesman Ed Martelle declined comment, citing customer privacy concerns.

Airport police Sgt. Belinda Nettles said officers did not respond to the incident.

Baldwin tweeted that it would be his last flight with American, despite the fact that they show

"30 Rock" for in-flight entertainment. He mocked American Airlines flight attendants on Twitter, saying the airline is "where Catholic school gym teachers from the 1950's find jobs as flight attendants."

Baldwin called "Words With Friends" an "addicting" game. Players compete online to score the most points by building words with tiles on a Scrabble-like game board.

Baldwin plays the role of executive Jack Donaghy on "30 Rock" and played an amorous ex-husband to Meryl Streep in the 2009 romantic comedy "It's Complicated."

*In Loving Memory of
our Dearly Beloved*

Camilo Arellano Orallo

Lovingly known as "Milo"

October 28, 1943 – December 4, 2011

His memory will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife:

Cirila Orallo

Children:

Imelda Orallo Reyes
Marilou Orallo Johnson
Richard Orallo
Rhoda Marie Orallo Ibanez
Camille Orallo

Brother & Sisters:

Mary Layson
Flordelisa Mortel
Juanito Orallo
Luisa Orallo

*He will also be deeply missed by his
numerous relatives and friends.*

Mass of intention is being celebrated each morning at 6:00am at Kristo Rai Church. Holy rosary is being prayed each evening at 8:00pm until Monday, December 12, 2011.

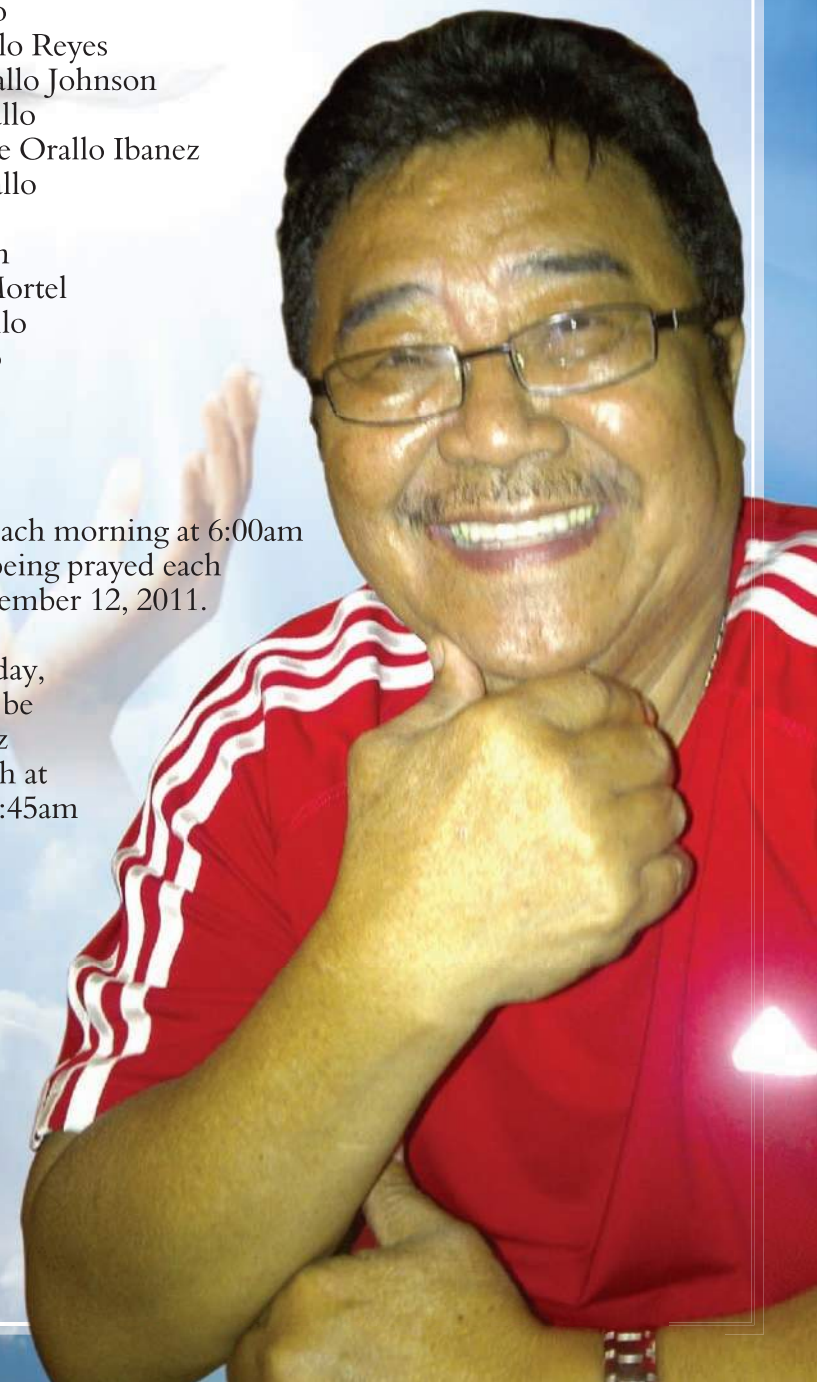
Funeral Services will be held on Tuesday, December 13, 2011. His remains will be escorted from Nuestra Senora dela Paz Memorial Chapel to Kristo Rai Church at 7:30am. Responso Service will be at 7:45am followed by Holy Rosary at 8:00am. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:00am.

His remains will be repatriated to Bulacan, Philippines on December 14, 2011.

Please join us in prayers.

Thank You & Maraming Salamat Po.

Cirila C. Orallo & Children



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The Muppets

Friday		4:20	7:20	9:40
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:40
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20	
Monday thru Thursday		4:20	7:20	

Jason Segel, Amy Adams
Children's/family, Comedy • Rated PG

Synopsis

When an evil oil man discovers black gold beneath Muppet Theater, Kermit recruits a Muppet super-fan and his two best friends to help gather up the gang for a telethon that will save the venue from being razed and replaced with a giant oil pump. Tex Richman (Chris Cooper) never met an oil field he couldn't suck dry. So when Tex discovers a bountiful reservoir right underneath Muppet Theater, he begins drawing up plans to claim the land and start drilling. Little does Tex realize that devoted Muppets fan Walter is currently in Los Angeles with his best friends Gary (Jason Segel) and Mary (Amy Adams), and that he's not about to let one man's greed spoil a good thing for everyone. With Kermit by their side, Walter, Gary, and Mary hatch a plan to put on a big telethon that will help them raise the ten million dollars needed to keep Muppet Theater standing.



Arthur Christmas

Friday		4:10	7:10	9:45
Saturday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:45
Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10	
Monday thru Thursday		4:10	7:10	

James McAvoy, Hugh Laurie
Comedy • Rated PG



Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn-Part 1

Friday		4:15	7:15	10:00
Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:15	10:00
Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:15	
Monday thru Thursday		4:15	7:15	

Robert Pattinson, Kristen Stewart
Fantasy • Rated PG 13



Happy Feet Two

Friday		4:00	7:00	9:30
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	9:30
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Monday thru Thursday		4:00	7:00	

Elijah Wood, Robin Williams
Children's/family • Rated PG



Immortals

Friday		4:25	7:25	9:55
Saturday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:55
Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:25	
Monday thru Thursday		4:25	7:25	

Henry Cavill, Mickey Rourke, Freida Pinto
Epic • Rated R



Jack and Jill

Friday		4:30	7:30	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:30	7:30	9:50
Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30	
Monday thru Thursday		4:30	7:30	

Adam Sandler, Katie Holmes
Comedy • Rated PG



Tower Heist

Friday			9:35
Saturday			9:35
Sunday		7:05	
Monday thru Thursday		7:05	

Ben Stiller, Eddie Murphy
Crime, Comedy • Rated PG 13



Puss in Boots

Friday		4:05	7:05
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05
Sunday	1:05	4:05	
Monday thru Thursday		4:05	

Anronio Banderas, Salma Hayek
Children's/family • Rated PG

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Poof! Harry Potter park to appear in Hollywood

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Universal Studios will spend several hundred million dollars to build a Harry Potter attraction inside its existing Hollywood theme park in hopes of mimicking the success of a similar park in Orlando, Florida.

Executives announced the project Tuesday with much fanfare, spraying confetti and hoisting mugs of the wizardly brew butterbeer.

The attraction, based on the Warner Bros. movies about the boy wizard in J.K. Rowling's novels, will create more than 1,000 jobs at Universal and even more indirectly from an expected boost in tourism, officials said.

At the same time, Orlando's Wizarding World of Harry Potter will get an expansion. Since the Harry Potter attraction opened in Florida in June of last year, company executives have said attendance has jumped by about 50 percent, but did not give raw figures.

"It was a game changer for us



Harry Potter cast members James Phelps, left, and Oliver Phelps make a butterbeer toast as Universal Parks & Resorts announces the Harry Potter attraction is coming to Universal Studios Hollywood in Universal City, Calif., Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2011.

and frankly for Orlando," Universal Studios president Ron Meyer told reporters after an announcement at the Universal Studios Hollywood. "The expansion in Orlando will make it that much more of a must-see, and we'll have the same experience here."

Police: Ex-Miss USA was above legal alcohol limit

DETROIT (AP)—Former Miss USA Rima Fakih was speeding and weaving through traffic with an uncorked, half-empty bottle of champagne and a blood-alcohol level more than twice the legal limit when she was arrested in the Detroit enclave of Highland Park, according to a police report released Tuesday.

The report on her drunken-driving arrest obtained by The Associated Press through a Freedom of Information Act request says the 26-year-old from Dearborn was pulled over early Saturday going 60 mph (97 kph), weaving in heavy traffic and changing lanes without using a turn signal.

A police officer whose name was given only as R. Kalis said the traffic stop happened about 2:15 a.m.

The report says she was driving a black 2011 Jaguar.

Kalis reported asking for the driver's license said the "driver immediately identified herself as Miss USA and stated that she was driving a friend's car."

Kalis said Fakih "appeared disoriented and had very slurred speech while fumbling for her purse." Kalis asked Fakih if she had been drinking, and she said, "No, not at all."

In the report, officers said they found an open and half-empty bottle of Moët & Chandon champagne on the floorboard behind the driver's seat.

"I swear, I didn't know it was open," Fakih told Kalis, according to the report.

Two breath tests showed a 0.19 percent and a 0.20 percent blood-alcohol level. Michigan law defines drunkenness at a level of 0.08 percent.

The report said Fakih was handcuffed and taken to a police station. It said she was placed in a cell "until she was sober for her safety and the safety of others."

Police said they seized Fakih's driver's license and issued her a temporary license. She was ordered to report to court within 10 days. Besides drunken driving, Fakih also faces charges of possessing an open intoxicant in a motor vehicle and careless driving.

Phone and email messages seeking comment were left Tuesday for Fakih's lawyer, Doraid Elder. Email messages also were left for Fakih on Monday and Tuesday.

The former Miss Michigan born in Lebanon won the Miss USA Pageant in 2010 and her reign ended earlier this year.

She won the Miss USA Pageant in May 2010. Her reign ended June 19, 2011. She was the first Miss Michigan to win the title since 1993 and the first Arab American winner ever.

While still holding the Miss USA title, Fakih became a contestant on the USA Network's "WWE Tough Enough" show. The show started with 12 men and women competing to be professional wrestlers.

Fakih was voted off the show in the episode broadcast April 25.



Fakih

Executives did not immediately detail their plans for the Hollywood park, but Meyer said there was enough room to expand.

"We're not landlocked," Meyer said. "We're (on) 400 acres on this lot and 200 of them are still not developed."

Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky said he was told that a live concert venue, Gibson Amphitheatre, would be scrapped to make way for the attraction. He said it would open around 2014, but officials did not give a date.

The widely expected an-

Restraining order granted against Terrence Howard

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Terrence Howard was ordered Tuesday to stay 100 yards away from his estranged wife after she claimed the Oscar-nominated actor repeatedly threatened and hit her during their marriage.

The star denies the allegations. Superior Court Judge Scott Gordon granted the stay-away

order sought by Michelle Howard after she filed a lengthy declaration alleging abuse began within a week of the couple's January 2010 marriage.

Michelle Howard filed for divorce a year later.

The restraining order remains in effect until a Jan. 17 court hearing.

She claims Howard, 42, has repeatedly hit her and threatened her in a text message last week. She stated in a sworn declaration that she is in constant fear of Howard and has chronic health issues caused by the actor's treatment.

Howard in his own sworn declaration wrote that he has never threatened his wife and that she has repeatedly vowed to ruin his reputation and release private details.

"I live in constant fear of Michelle's endeavors to ruin my reputation; even providing this

nouncement happened in typically dressed-up Hollywood style, complete with staff wearing scarves representing the various houses of the fictional wizard's school, Hogwarts, beneath a theater marquee that said, "Hogwarts is coming to Hollywood."

James and Oliver Phelps, who play the twins Fred and George Weasley in the movies, were present, as was California Gov. Jerry Brown. The governor appeared a day after he proposed raising taxes to help make up for the state's projected shortfall.

"Yeah, we have some tough times, but the movie industry keeps hope alive," he said.

Comcast Corp. bought a majority stake in NBCUniversal in January in a \$13.5 billion deal. It bought out its 50 percent partner in the Universal Orlando theme park, The Blackstone Group, for \$1.03 billion in June.

In the nine months through September, its theme-park revenue rose 33 percent from a year ago to \$1.49 billion, while operating cash flow jumped 61 percent to \$644 million.

That makes it Comcast's second-most profitable division behind pay TV channels, accounting for just under a quarter of the operating cash flow overall.

declaration may well lead to my being subjected to a paparazzi blitz which would not be good for my career," Howard wrote.

Michelle Howard wrote that Howard has hit her several times and threatened to throw her from a hotel balcony in South Africa last year. She included a text message she said he sent

to her on Thursday in which he begged her not to pursue the divorce and threaten his career, ending the missive, "I can't promise how I will respond."

Howard wrote in his filing that he immediately followed up the message with another text stating that he wasn't threat-

ening her.

"Despite my efforts to remove myself physically from (Howard's) life, his periodic mood swings from anger, threats and violence to statements of love and requests for reconciliation continue and have not subsided," she wrote.

Howard appeared in the first "Iron Man" film and received an Oscar nomination in 2005 for his role in "Hustle and Flow."

His attorney Christian Markey III did not immediately return an email message seeking comment.



Howard

Lady Gaga discusses anti-bullying at White House

WASHINGTON (AP)—Lady Gaga visited the White House on Tuesday to discuss bullying prevention.

The pop singer met with Obama administration staffers on the issue and afterward, Obama senior adviser Valerie Jarrett praised the star as “a source of strength for many young people who feel isolated and scared at their schools.”

“Lady Gaga has described

this cause as a personal one—she has said that as a child, she was often picked on for being different,” Jarrett wrote in a blog post on the White House website. “I am deeply moved by the way she has used her story, and her success, to inspire young people, and shine the spotlight on important issues.”

Gaga didn’t have a chance to meet with President Barack Obama, who was travel-

ing in Kansas for a speech on the economy.

But the two have met before, when the singer attended a fundraiser for Obama’s re-election campaign in California earlier this year.

Gaga was spotted by news crews as she exited the White House grounds Tuesday afternoon dressed all in white, including sky-high white heels, with her long blond

hair down.

The White House held an anti-bullying conference earlier this year, and the administration estimates that bullying affects 13 million students, or about a third of those attending school. Jarrett said the administration looked forward to supporting Gaga’s Born This Way Foundation, to explore how to change the culture and policies around children in school.

‘Dexter’ co-stars Hall and Carpenter divorce final

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A judge has finalized an uncontested divorce between Michael C. Hall and his “Dexter” co-star Jennifer Carpenter.

Court records show Superior Court Judge John Sandoz finalized the divorce on Friday in Los Angeles.

Carpenter filed for divorce nearly a year ago, citing irreconcilable differences. Hall and Carpenter married in December 2008.

Court filings state the details of the division of property will remain confidential.

Hall plays Dexter Morgan, a serial killer who targets other murderers on the hit Showtime series, which is now in its sixth season.

Carpenter plays Hall’s sister, a Miami police detective who is often on the trail of her brother’s victims, but does not know he is a killer.



In this Aug. 29, 2010 file photo, Michael C. Hall arrives with wife and co-star Jennifer Carpenter for the 62nd Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles.

‘Frozen Planet’ to debut on Discovery on March 18

NEW YORK (AP)—Discovery Channel’s documentary series “Frozen Planet” will premiere March 18, and will encompass seven episodes including a program on climate change hosted by David Attenborough.

On that seventh episode, the famed British naturalist will investigate what rising temperatures will mean for the planet and life on it.

The network made the announcement Tuesday.

“Frozen Planet” is described as “the ultimate portrait of our Earth’s polar regions.” A co-production of Discovery Channel and BBC, it was four years in the making and comes from the team behind “Planet Earth,” the acclaimed series that aired on Discovery in 2007.

The “Frozen Planet” team filmed in every nation inside the Arctic and Antarctic Circles during 2,356 days in the field, 1

1/2 years at sea, more than six months on the sea ice and 134 hours beneath that ice, according to Discovery.



In this undated image released by Discovery Channel, a mother polar bear and two cubs are shown during the filming of Discovery Channel’s documentary series “Frozen Planet,” premiering March 18, 2012.

Humbled Netflix CEO still thinking, talking big

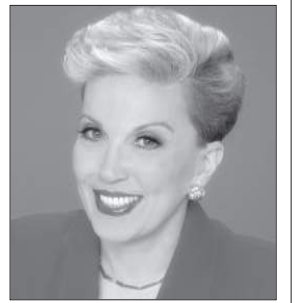
SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—CEO Reed Hastings says he believes the poor decisions that have dragged down the Internet’s leading video subscription service will be forgotten like a bad movie made by a great film director.

Shaking off the stigma of a massive flop won’t be easy. But Hastings sounded confident Tuesday at an investor conference that he could pull it off.

Hastings predicted Netflix Inc. will overcome its recent adversity and remain at the forefront of a shift that increasingly will turn watching Internet-distributed video into one of the world’s most popular pastimes.

Not even death can heal family’s seven-year feud

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: After a bitter seven-year estrangement from his family, my husband received his grandfather’s eulogy in the mail. His father sent it with a note that read, “Here’s a copy of the eulogy I read at his funeral.” Abby, this was how his family notified him of his grandfather’s death—two weeks after the fact. We had attempted several reconciliations with no success.

A month later, my husband died at the age of 36—depressed and suffering from black lung disease. His family blames ME for his depression. Not a single relative of my husband’s attended his memorial service despite being given three weeks’ notice and my having mailed them formal invitations.

My husband left a declaration in his will that his family should never know our child, whom they abandoned at 2 months old via a letter to us and my family. I feel I have been choking on their toxic behavior and venom. Do you have any advice as we move forward with our crosses after being abused by these narcissists for more than seven years?

SAD AND BITTER WIDOW IN TENNESSEE

DEAR SAD AND BITTER WIDOW: Yes. Put down those crosses and recognize that the anger and bitterness you feel will only poison yourself and your child. Obey your husband’s wishes and raise your child in a healthy emotional environment—as far from your husband’s family as possible. Unless you do, the mistreatment to which you have been subjected will affect both your lives and you will waste what could be a happy future.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I know some children who seem to be mature and are able to make logical decisions on a fairly regular basis. Still, making a decision under stress when one has not had a lot of experience can be difficult.

Having said that, at what age do you think it is appropriate to leave a child alone at home? Sometimes it’s difficult to arrange for child care when kids are out of school. Do you have any guidelines as to what to look for that can help make this decision?

BUSY WORKING PARENT IN KANSAS

DEAR BUSY WORKING PARENT: I don’t think children should be left alone if there is any other alternative available—after-school programs, YMCA, activities where they will have adult supervision. Too many things can go wrong, and you would never forgive yourself if one of them happened to your child.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: How does one respond to a former co-worker/acquaintance who wants you to be a reference at your current workplace? My experience with him was not ideal. He was a good worker, but he became irritable when he was under stress and drowned everyone around him in negative energy. I don’t want to work with this individual again, but I prefer to be non-confrontational.

FORMER COLLEAGUE IN SUNNYVALE, CALIF.

DEAR FORMER COLLEAGUE: If you are asked again, tell your former co-worker you are not comfortable assuming that responsibility. Don’t be defensive and don’t allow the person to pressure you. And you do not have to explain why you have chosen not to give the reference.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Colo. judge allows Sheen’s ex-wife to return home

ASPEN, Colo. (AP)—A Colorado judge will let actor Charlie Sheen’s ex-wife, Brooke Mueller, to return to California following her arrest in Aspen on assault and drug charges. A Pitkin County judge on Monday approved a request by Mueller’s attorney to allow Mueller to go back home so she can care for her children. According to the Aspen Daily News, officers arrested Mueller Saturday at a nightclub after a woman reported being assaulted by Mueller. Authorities released Mueller after she posted \$11,000 bond. She is due back in court Dec. 19. Sheen and Mueller divorced earlier this year, citing Christmas Day 2009 as the day of their breakup. Sheen was arrested in Aspen that day on suspicion of assaulting Mueller. He completed his pro-

bation in that case last November.

Theater named for ‘Addams Family’ star John Astin

BALTIMORE (AP)—A renovated theater at Johns Hopkins University has been renamed for “The Addams Family” actor John Astin. Astin starred as Gomez Addams in the television show from 1964 to 1966. He has taught at the university since 2001 and is credited with revitalizing the school’s theater program. The Baltimore Sun reports that the 104-seat John Astin Theater recently underwent a \$210,000 makeover. Astin graduated from Johns Hopkins in 1952.

Barbara Orbison, widow of Roy Orbison, dies in LA

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Barbara Orbi-

son, the widow of rock ‘n’ roll pioneer Roy Orbison, has died in Los Angeles. She was 60. Family spokeswoman Sarah McMullen says Barbara Orbison died Tuesday at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center, where she had been hospitalized since May. Roy Orbison died in 1988. Barbara Orbison was his manager and co-produced a four-CD box set of her husband’s 107 recordings after his death. “Roy Orbison: The Soul of Rock and Roll” was released in 2008 and contains all of his hits and 12 previously unreleased tracks. McMullen says Barbara Orbison’s Nashville, Tenn.-based publishing company, Still Working Music, was recently awarded BMI’s 2010 Song of the Year for Taylor Swift’s “You Belong to Me.” Last year Barbara Orbison accepted a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on her husband’s behalf.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

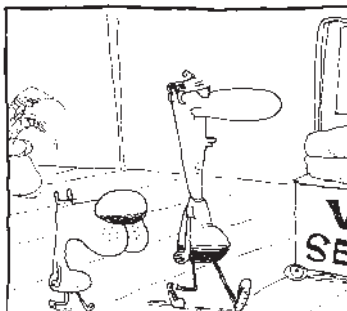
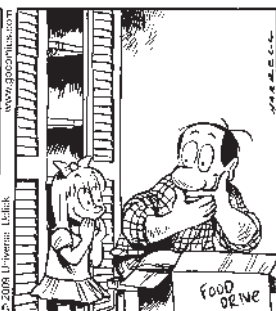


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

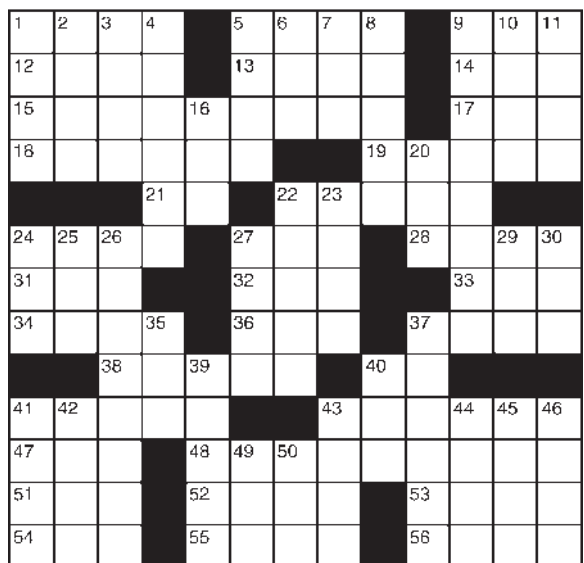
By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Get well truly
- 5 Start over
- 9 Dandy locations
- 12 Pelvic bones
- 13 On
- 14 "I — Camera"
- 15 Mask
- 17 Back talk
- 18 Advertising section
- 19 Selassie worshiper
- 21 B&O, for ex.
- 22 Dodge
- 24 — and crafts
- 27 Hearty brew
- 28 Sandwich treat
- 31 Round Table address
- 32 60 sec.
- 33 Mischievous tyke
- 34 First course, often
- 36 Peculiar
- 37 Touch
- 38 Obliterate
- DOWN**
- 40 Yours
- 41 Earring
- 43 Random drawing?
- 47 Lubricate
- 48 HBO's vampire series
- 51 Wilde-beest
- 52 Greek vowel
- 53 Radius neighbor
- 54 — out a living
- 55 Coral structure
- 56 Appear
- 3 Has a bug
- 4 "Star Wars"
- 5 Huck's weaponry
- 6 Elmer, to Bugs
- 8 "Tosca," e.g.
- 9 It barely connects to the sternum
- 10 Leave out
- 11 One of the Three Bears
- 16 Mess up
- 20 Commotion
- 22 Skip a phoneme
- 23 Sell
- 24 Fool
- 25 Carnival city
- 26 Loyal to the end
- 27 Andy's old radio pal
- 29 Ostrich's kin
- 30 Make up your mind
- 35 Opposite of "post-"
- 37 Greek god of the winds
- 39 Moving about
- 40 Flash —
- 41 Theater box
- 42 Sty cry
- 43 Unwilling to listen
- 44 Apportion (out)
- 45 Unrivaled
- 46 Cheese choice
- 49 Shad product
- 50 Salt Lake athlete

Solution time: 25 mins.



Yesterday's answer 12-8



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99c per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Nicki Minaj, 29; Ian Somerhalder, 33; Dominic Monaghan, 35; Teri Hatcher, 47.

Happy Birthday: Experience is knowledge that can spice up your life if well-planned and executed. Don't sit back and miss out on something you want to do. Try new things, visit new places and make new friends. It's the change you need to motivate you to elaborate on your ideas and plans. Do what's best for you. Your numbers are 6, 19, 22, 27, 30, 39, 47.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): A financial change will help you plan for the future. Stay within your means and you will ease your stress. You don't have to be generous with your cash to win friends; your time, patience and understanding will be plenty. ★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Make plans to take part in a stimulating event or activity that offers the opportunity to network and develop a project you want to pursue. Love is highlighted, and spending time romancing someone you care for will bring high returns. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Emotional deception will develop if you show uncertainty regarding the way you feel about something or someone. You have to be as honest and straightforward as possible, in order to invite the right kind of attention and results. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A change in a partnership will leave you questioning what went wrong. Ulterior motives are probably at the root of any problem you encounter. Be honest about what you really want and proceed in a direction that will satisfy your needs. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): A change of pace and location will get you thinking about what and where you are heading. Don't let a financial concern stop you from following through with your plans. You mustn't let anyone take advantage of your generosity. ★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't get angry or upset; get moving. It's up to you to follow through with your plans, regardless of what anyone else decides to do. Don't rely on others to make choices for you or to do what you want. Romantic opportunity is apparent. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Put time and effort into perfecting your home emotionally, physically and financially. Go over personal papers. Making alterations that better suit your goals will encourage you to start a project you've been putting off. ★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You'll be drawn to a partnership that looks creatively promising. Making suggestions will bring you closer to a decision that can translate into higher income and greater flexibility. A short trip will enhance a relationship. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Expect to be asked to take on someone else's responsibilities. Do what you can, but don't jeopardize your own work. An old friend will be able to help you out. Visiting and talking face-to-face will help you get what you want. ★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Enjoy getting to know some of your peers better. Your presence at a gathering will make you more approachable to a wider variety of people. Discussing what people do and don't like will help you make better choices. Love is in the stars. ★★★★★



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Not everyone will understand what you are trying to do. Don't let your emotions take over. You have to do things as you see fit and for the right reasons. Ulterior motives won't work. Honesty is first and foremost. ★★



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Arguing won't get you anywhere. You'll be pulled between two choices: One you want and one you feel obliged to follow to completion. Love is in the stars, and romance will enhance your personal life and your future. ★★★★★

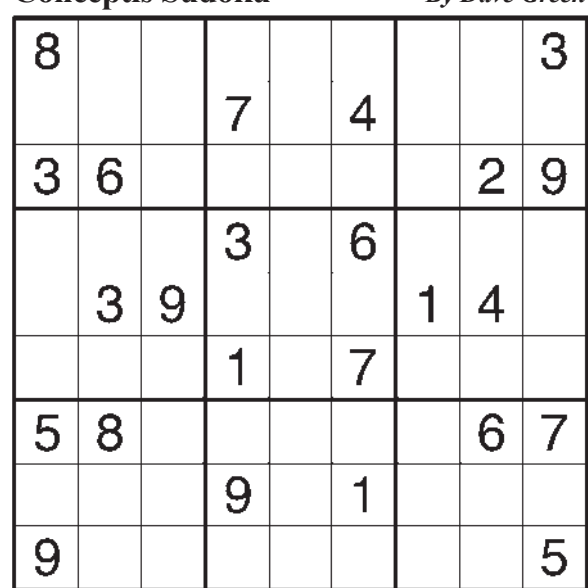
Birthday Baby: You are savvy, courageous and inspiring. You have strength of character.

Eugenia's Web sites: eugenialast.com for confidential consultations, myspace.com/eugenialast for Eugenia's blog, astroadvice.com for fun

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



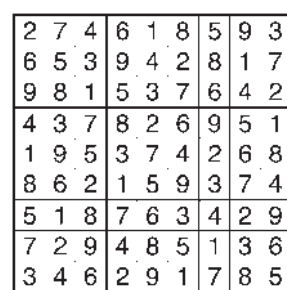
Difficulty Level ★★★

12/08

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★

12/07

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

Solution: 6 letters



© 2011 Universal Uclick www.wonderword.com Jan. 15 on a scale back

Affection, Artwork, Atmosphere, Care, Celebration, Cherish, Comfort, Community, Expect, Family, Feel, Flowers, Found, Free, Friends, Healthy, Home, House, Laughter, Layout, Life, Love, Miss, Office, Parents, Party, Peace, Picture, Play, Real, Reflect, Relax, Residence, Room, Safe, Search, Sentimental, Simple, Smells, Space, Style, Times, Tone, Tools, Warm

Yesterday's Answer: Wheeler Field

Shorter NBA schedule has 42 back-to-back-to-backs



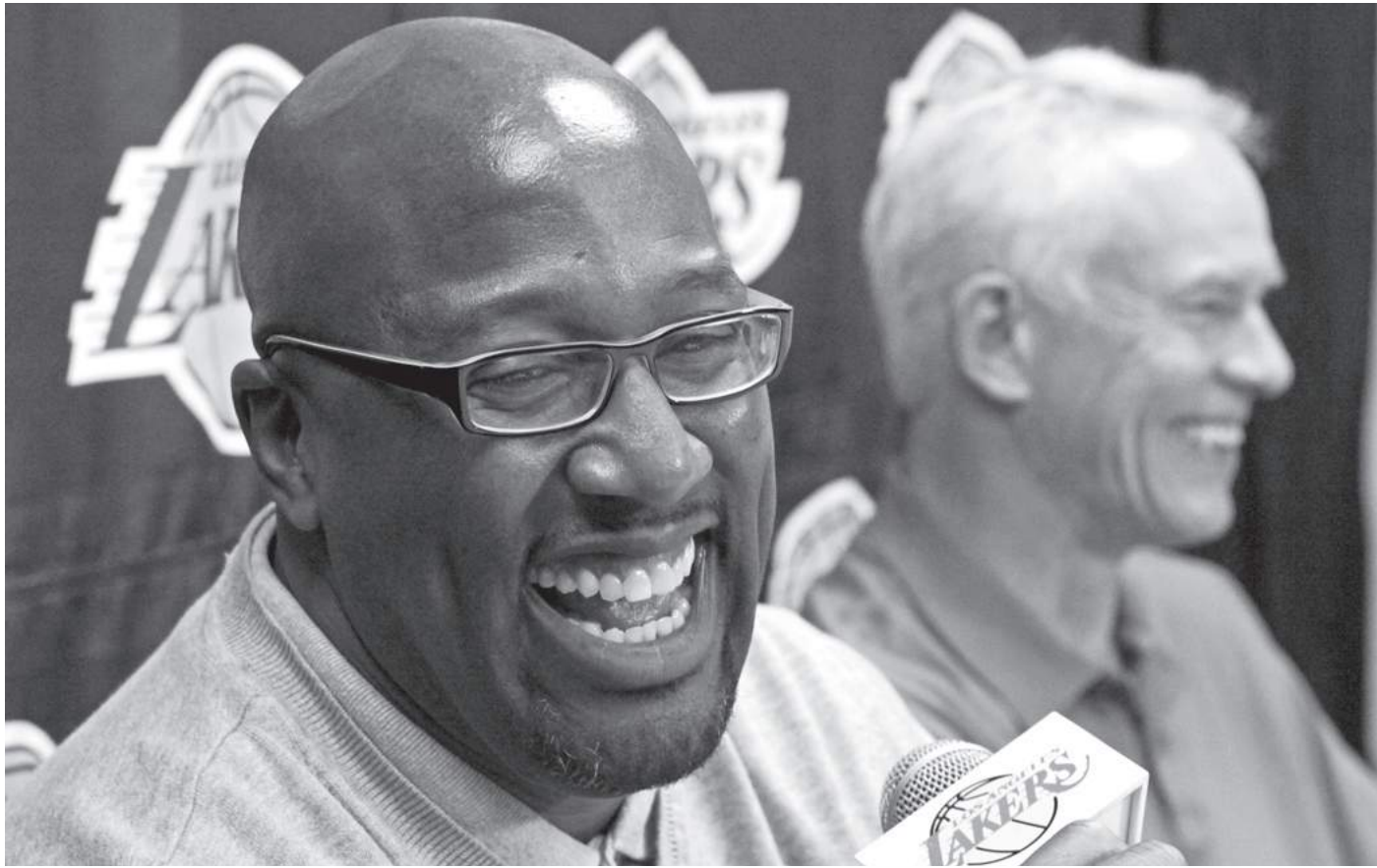
NEW YORK (AP)—The Los Angeles Lakers will play games on the first three nights of the NBA season, the first of 42 back-to-back-to-back sets teams will face during this lock-out-shortened season.

The NBA announced the compacted, 66-game schedule on Tuesday night, one that will require every team to play on three consecutive nights at least once. And it will force every team to navigate demanding stretches that are never seen during a full season, such as the nine games in 12 nights the Atlanta Hawks face starting with their Dec. 27 opener.

The league's 66th season begins with five games on Christmas, including the Lakers hosting the Chicago Bulls. Los Angeles then visits Sacramento the next night before returning home to host Utah on Dec. 27.

Teams will play 48 conference games and 18 against the opposing conference, meaning they play only three nonconference opponents home and away. The league did preserve its most storied rivalry, with the Lakers traveling to Boston for a Feb. 9 matchup before the Celtics open a stretch of eight road games in 13 nights in March with games on back-to-back nights at Staples Center.

Dallas and Miami also will play twice, following their



Los Angeles Lakers general manager Mitch Kupchak, rear right, and head coach Mike Brown talk to reporters during a news conference at the NBA basketball team's training facility in El Segundo, Calif., Friday, Dec. 2, 2011.

Christmas NBA finals rematch with a March 12 game in Miami. The Heat and Lakers also play two games.

The 50-game 1999 season featured 64 sets of back-to-back-to-backs and was plagued by sloppy basketball being played on fatigued legs. The NBA faces a similar predicament now after failing to reach a new labor deal in time to save the Nov. 1 start to

the season.

Instead, a tentative agreement was reached on Nov. 26. Lawyers for the owners and players are still finalizing the rest of the deal, with both sides expected to vote on it Thursday before training camps and free agency open on Friday.

Aging teams such as the Celtics, Lakers and NBA champion Mavericks will have to pace

themselves, while younger teams such as Oklahoma City figure to be better prepared for the grind.

"You're not going to have those breaks of three or four days that you sometimes got in the old 82-game schedule, when it was the normal regular schedule," former NBA coach and current analyst Mike Fratello said during the schedule an-

nouncement on NBA TV. "Now with everything being compacted, games come that much more quickly, you've got to gear up back up again, you move onto the next one immediately."

The Denver Nuggets, hit hard by free agency with three of their players in China, face another difficult obstacle in the schedule. They play five games in six nights spanning the new year,

including a home-and-home set with the Lakers on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

The Nuggets do not host Carmelo Anthony, whom they traded to the Knicks last February. Deron Williams, sent from Utah to New Jersey days later, is scheduled to return to Salt Lake City on Jan. 14.

Other quirks of the schedule include:

-Toronto plays a franchise-record 19 games in 31 days in January, including five games in six days from Jan. 9-14.

-Cleveland has its longest homestand ever, nine games from Feb. 8-28—including a visit from LeBron James and the Heat on Feb. 17.

-Philadelphia plays its first five games on the road, its longest season-opening trip ever.

Miami will appear on ABC or ESPN 16 times, the most allowable, followed by 15 appearances apiece for the Lakers and Bulls. The Lakers and Celtics each appear a league-high 10 times on TNT.

The Nets' final game in New Jersey after 35 years before heading to Brooklyn will be April 23 against Philadelphia. The Kings could play their finale in Sacramento on April 26 against the Lakers without a plan for a new arena.

The regular season is scheduled to conclude April 26 and the playoffs will open two nights later. The last possible date of the NBA finals is June 26.

Lawyer: Another Sandusky accuser steps forward



STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (AP)—A 19-year-old man has filed a complaint with state police alleging he was sexually abused by

Jerry Sandusky after the former coach gave him liquor on the Penn State campus in 2004, the accuser's lawyer said Tuesday.

Charles Schmidt said the client, whom he did not identify, went to his law firm about three weeks ago, after Sandusky was charged with sexually abusing eight boys over a 15-year period.

"He suffered one incident of abuse, to use the legal term—involuntary deviate sexual intercourse—allegedly at the hands of Mr. Sandusky," Schmidt said. "That occurred on the Penn State campus, we believe in the area of the football facilities."

Sandusky's lawyer, Joseph Amendola, said he was unfamiliar with the allegations Schmidt was making.

The new claim came the day a lawyer for another young man who accused Sandusky of sexual abuse said he expects his client and at least five other accusers to testify at a preliminary hearing next week.

The lawyer said he has information that the six young men whose testimony before a grand jury contributed to a report detailing allegations against Sandusky will be called to testify next Tuesday. The attorney spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because he said he is trying to ensure his client's identity isn't revealed publicly.

Sandusky is charged with 40 counts of child sex abuse, and prosecutors allege he met his victims through a charity he founded in 1977 to help at-risk children, The Second Mile. Sandusky, 67, denies being a pedophile and has vowed to fight the charges. In interviews with NBC and

The New York Times, he has said he showered and horsed around with boys but never sexually abused them.

The existence of Schmidt's client was first reported by WHP-TV in Harrisburg.

Schmidt told the AP that his client was 12 years old, dealing with the death of his mother and suffering emotional issues at the time of the campus incident. The lawyer said the two met through The Second Mile and his client claims Sandusky gave him liquor while in the office on campus. The grand jury report did not allege any instances of Sandusky giving boys alcohol.

Schmidt said his law firm is conducting its own investigation into the client's claims.

"We hope to have it wrapped up within another week. We believe him to be credible," Schmidt said. "Everything that we've been able to unearth since has corroborated what he told us, but we'll continue to do our due diligence."

The preliminary hearing, at which a judge would determine if prosecutors have enough evidence to take the case to trial, could last a day or more since the defense has the right to cross-examine the state's witnesses.

The state attorney general's office would not comment on the evidence authorities plan to offer to show probable cause the crimes occurred.

Amendola said Tuesday that a police officer witness should not be able to testify in the place of the accusers, based on evidentiary rules that pertain to hearsay.

"Our position would be that these people have to testify," Amendola said. "And one isn't sufficient, because you have eight separate incidents ... with eight separate alleged victims or accusers."

Prosecutors listed eight victims in the grand jury report but didn't know the identities of two of them when they issued the report in early November. The report said one of those two was a

boy seen being sodomized by Sandusky in a Penn State football complex shower in 2002.

Amendola has said he believes he knows the identity of the boy in the shower and that the person dined with Sandusky this past summer.

Amendola said he's looking forward to questioning the prosecution witnesses—including any accusers.

"We will, for the very first time, have the opportunity to face Jerry's accusers and question them under oath about their allegations," he said in a statement Monday. "We look forward to this opportunity."

Former sex crimes prosecutor Richard DeSipio said prosecutors may have to call the six known accusers for the judge to uphold the 40 counts. Defense lawyers sometimes waive preliminary hearings if they are worried about publicity for their clients, but DeSipio said he is not surprised Amendola is demanding the hearing.

"This is their first and only opportunity before trial to actually see the witnesses ... to hear their tone and demeanor and to question them and see how they respond to questions and also to flush out details," said DeSipio, who is now a criminal defense lawyer in Philadelphia.

Assistant football coach Mike McQueary, who has been identified as the witness to the 2002 shower encounter, could also be called to testify. McQueary's account wasn't immediately brought to the attention of authorities even though high-level people at Penn State apparently were told about an incident in the showers.

In the wake of the scandal, the university last month fired coach Joe Paterno and accepted President Graham Spanier's resignation. Paterno has said he wishes he had done more about allegations against Sandusky.

Athletic Director Tim Curley has been placed on administrative leave, and Vice President Gary

Schultz, who was in charge of the university's police department, has stepped down. Schultz and Curley are charged with lying to the grand jury and failure to report to police. They maintain their innocence.

Also Tuesday, Penn State President Rodney Erickson told skeptical faculty members not to worry that school trustees would "whitewash" their own investigation. Erickson pledged to the University Faculty Senate that investigators will have unfettered access to and cooperation from the school. He said the leadership of a committee checking into the allegations should lend confidence "that there will be no whitewash ... no sweeping under the rug."

Trustees have appointed former FBI director Louis Freeh to lead the probe for a committee spearheaded by trustee Kenneth Frazier.

Erickson said he would urge trustees to have the committee members meet with faculty.

Since taking over for Spanier, Erickson has vowed to make Penn State a leader in raising awareness of issues related to child abuse following the scandal that has tarnished the school's image. The effort includes using football bowl revenue that typically goes back to the athletic department to causes related to such issues.

The total revenue, Erickson said Tuesday, will reach at least \$2 million, \$500,000 more than the amount the school promised last week would be donated for programs at the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center.

The additional revenue will now go toward helping to establish a Penn State institute that would work in the treatment and prevention, as well as research into, child abuse. The first piece to the institute would be a Center for the Protection of Children to be based at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center, Erickson said.

"We're taking both steps to (create) change immediately as well as a longer-term goal in which our faculty can be very much involved," Erickson said.

Marlins trying to buy up the best of the pond



DALLAS
(AP)—Jeffrey Loria quickly

marched down the hallway with his team president, trailed by their top aides, and hustled into a meeting room with a labor lawyer from Major League Baseball.

Having already made the biggest splash at the winter meetings, the Miami Marlins owner was trying to reel in Albert Pujols and perhaps other big-name free agents with the newfound riches from their new ballpark.

"He's not the only guy," Loria said about 20 minutes later before heading back upstairs on an elevator with his delegation.

Baseball's new Big Fish were the talk of the winter meetings Tuesday, with teams wondering how close the Marlins were to an agreement with Pujols on a deal that could be worth \$200 million or more over 10 years for the three-time NL MVP.

St. Louis said it submitted a new offer Tuesday to keep Pujols with the Cardinals, a team he's already led to two World Series titles in the last six seasons. Agents for other players said they had heard the Los Angeles Angels were bidding, too.

Traditional big spenders such as the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox were reduced to spectators.

"They have a new stadium. They're excited about it, and it's good for baseball," former Marlins and current Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "They had hoped that they'd get the new stadium and they would be able to do those types of things. Our roster is pretty set. We have a lot of guys that are on long-term deals. That's why maybe there's not a lot happening for us."

Having already reached deals with All-Star closer Heath Bell (\$27 million for three years) and All-Star shortstop Jose Reyes (\$106 million for six), the Marlins' interest in Pujols is real. What's unclear is whether the first baseman is prepared to go to Miami or whether his talks with the Marlins are an attempt to push the Cardinals higher.

"I know the ownership group is putting their best foot forward and trying to do everything that they can to make this possible," new Cardinals manager Mike Matheny said, "but I also know it's a complicated decision on both sides. There's a lot going on, a lot that I'm not even involved in, but I think it's clear to say that St. Louis Cardinals would love to have Albert, and we'll see how it all plays out."

With the Angels, Pujols could take over at first base from Mark Trumbo, who is recovering from a stress fracture in his right foot and could be shifted to third.

"He's become a very proficient first baseman, and hopefully that comfort level, catching a ground ball and the activities you need to play there will translate over to third base," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said.

Elsewhere, Prince Fielder was still in play in the hitters' market,



Florida Marlins owner Jeffrey Loria walks through the lobby of the hotel hosting Major League Baseball's winter meetings in Dallas, Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2011.

and C.J. Wilson and Mark Buehrle were among the available starting pitchers on the second day of the four-day swap session, which has been relatively slow.

The New York Mets agreed to trade outfielder Angel Pagan to the San Francisco Giants for outfielder Andres Torres and pitcher Ramon Ramirez, and reached agreements with free-agent relievers Frank Francisco (\$12 million for two years) and Jon Rauch (\$3.5 million for one year). While the moves were not formally announced, Mets manager Terry Collins discussed them.

The Chicago White Sox traded closer Sergio Santos to the Toronto

Blue Jays for pitching prospect Nestor Molina, and the Minnesota Twins dealt right-hander Kevin Slowey to the Colorado Rockies for a player to be named.

When the meetings reach their last full day Wednesday, roughly two dozen free agents must decide by midnight EST on salary arbitration offers from their former clubs. David Ortiz, who has said he wants to stay with the Boston Red Sox, appeared likely to accept.

AL champion Texas planned to meet Tuesday night with Wilson, the chatty left-hander who went 16-7 during the regular season but was 0-3 in October.

"We're just staying in commu-

nication, that's all we've agreed to do," Rangers general manager Jon Daniels said. "We just agreed to stay in touch, keep each other posted and keep a dialogue. We're not holding him up, and he's not holding us up."

Reyes' deal is likely to be finalized on Wednesday. Miami already has an All-Star shortstop in Hanley Ramirez, and he appears headed to third base.

"Everybody it's waiting to see what's gonna happen with me or what I gonna do right? Ramirez wrote on Twitter. "What I am gonna do is work hard and get ready for next season because that is the only thing I can control."

Syracuse coach investigation faces several challenges



ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—Prosecutors investigating allegations of child molestation against former Syracuse assistant basketball coach Bernie Fine face obstacles that include finding corroborating proof, statutes of limitations on old accusations, and the credibility of the men who accuse him of sex abuse.

The 65-year-old Fine, who had been coach Jim Boeheim's top assistant since 1976, has adamantly denied wrongdoing. He was fired when three men made public accusations and ESPN played a 2002 recording of a phone call in which a woman ESPN identified as Laurie Fine, the coach's wife, tells accuser Bobby Davis she knew "everything that went on."

But state charges against Fine are out, for the time being. Davis is now 39 and his stepbrother Mike Lang, another former ball boy who also told ESPN that Fine molested him, is 45; both men say they were first abused as boys in the 1980s. Any crimes against them happened so long ago that the statute of limitations has expired. Davis went to police in 2002 but even then, it was already too late to bring any charges in New York.

That leaves a federal prosecution.

The U.S. Secret Service is running that investigation and it hinges on the claims of a third man, Zach Tomaselli of Lewiston, Maine. He has told authorities that Fine molested him in 2002 in a Pittsburgh hotel room on a team trip from Syracuse. He said Fine touched him "multiple" times in that one incident.

The federal statute of limitations that went into effect in 2002 allows prosecution until the victim reaches age 25; Tomaselli is 23 so there is still a window to bring charges.

Lee Kindlon, a criminal defense attorney who practices in state and federal courts, said even though that federal case could proceed, prosecutors will still have to jump other hurdles including a lack of physical proof for something that allegedly happened nine years ago, and Tomaselli's credibility.

Tomaselli faces his own sex abuse charges in Maine and told The Associated Press on Monday he would plead guilty to abusing a 13-year-old boy. He also accused his father of sexually abusing him but a New York State Police investigation that ended in September did not result in charges. The father, Fred Tomaselli, has said he thinks his son is lying about Fine.

"But these allegations are serious and I think the feds are doing the right thing and looking for proof to back up the accusations," Kindlon said.

Investigators searched Fine's home, office and school locker, looking for pornography that could be used "to sexually arouse or groom young males" to have sex. They took computers, cameras, disks and records, among other things. They're also looking for any records that would detail Fine's contact with boys.

Fine was fired on Nov. 27 after Tomaselli came forward and the tape was released.

Lawyers said the tape would probably be classified as hearsay and couldn't be used at trial. And Laurie Fine also generally couldn't be compelled to testify against her husband about anything he told her, though that marital privilege does not extend to what she personally saw.

Paul DerOhannesian, a defense lawyer and former Albany County prosecutor, said prosecutors still have some tools they can use: They can bring information and witnesses before a grand jury, which can result in perjury charges when witnesses are suspected of lying. That happened in the Penn State case involving a former assistant football coach and administrators, he said.

Syracuse University had its law firm investigate Davis' claims in 2005 and said the probe found no evidence to back up the accusations. The school was under no obligation to involve or inform law enforcement.

With the Fine scandal making headlines, authorities say other accusers may come forward but cases generally require more than an individual's statement. Without direct evidence, they could build a case around circumstantial evidence or indications of a cover-up, among other things, DerOhannesian said.

"Prosecutors will want to corroborate to the extent possible. That's really what an investigation is about, to corroborate an allegation," he said.

And federal prosecutors in northern New York, who claim a 98 percent conviction rate, acknowledge they usually bring cases they can win.

IT&E Voyagers, Shark Attack are No. 1 in Budweiser 8-Ball

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



Jonny's Bar & Grill's IT&E Voyagers and Wild Bill's Bar & Grill's Shark Attack finished first place in their respective Agingan and Obyan divisions of the 2011 Summer/Fall Budweiser Open 8-Ball League as the regular season of the Saipan Billiards Association competition came to a close last Tuesday.

Agingan Division's IT&E Voyagers breezed past Fotten Palau (28-77), 5-2, in a road match at Joe's Steakhouse to finish with a 12-game lead in the six-team division.

In similar fashion, Obyan Division's Shark Attack knocked off the runner-up team out of Jonny's, Team SCS (52-53), 5-2, at home and finished its season with a win-loss slate of 65-40.

In other results, Agingan runner-up IT&E Incredibles (64-41) stumbled in the final match



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Agingan Division's Jonny's Bar & Grill's Home Boyz Five, seen here in a file photo, shut out bottom feeder VFW Post 3457's X-Tream, 7-0, at home on Tuesday and now has a chance for a third place finish in the final standings as the SBA 2011 Summer/Fall Budweiser Open 8-Ball League regular season.

of the season, falling to the third-ranked Docomo Hustlers (60-45), 2-5, at Utopia Sports Bar, but still managed a second place berth in the post season Budweiser Cup tournament.

Docomo fared well down the home stretch but still finished tied with Jonny's Home Boyz Five (60-45), who skunked VFW Post 3457 X-Tream (27-78), 7-0, at home. The loss dropped X-Tream to a last place finish heading into the Bud Cup series.

Obyan's Crazy 8 (53-52) defeated 19th Hole Bar's Titans (45-60), 4-3, at home in Jonny's, while D'Pirates Bar's Pirata (50-55) climbed up a notch by downing 19th Hole's Poksu (50-55), 4-3, on the road.

Crazy 8 snagged second place by a game over Team SCS and finished the season with Shark Attack as the only two teams with winning records, while Pirata finished the year tied with Poksu, despite forfeiting two of

the seven matches.

The opening rounds of the divisional Bud Cup tournaments start on Tuesday.

The Bud Cup opening rounds will also serve as regular season tiebreaker matches for some teams still in a battle for third place.

Agingan's Docomo Hustlers and Home Boyz Five finished their schedules with identical records, while Obyan's Pirata and Poksu came out knotted together at the end of the season.

Coincidentally, these teams happened to be paired against each other in Tuesday's opening rounds.

League organizers have picked Utopia as the site for the Agingan match and D'Pirates as the venue for the Obyan pairing.

In the Bud Cup the most difficult rout to the finals is actually from the No. 1 seed, so perhaps X-Tream folded on purpose as the format of the Bud Cup tournament benefits lower-ranked squads. Lower-ranked teams are gifted home field advantage and even play against the lowest-ranked opponents possible.

Muhammad Ali back home after being hospitalized in Arizona



Muhammad Ali is home and doing as well as can be expected after he was hospitalized in

Arizona, the Louisville Courier-Journal reports.

The newspaper spoke with longtime Ali friend and Louisville radio personality John Ramsey, after Ramsey was quoted in the Star magazine saying the boxing legend had been hospitalized "after slipping out of consciousness at his Phoenix-area home."

Ramsey said he spoke by telephone with Ali's wife, Lonnie, last night and was told Ali is "home and well, for a person who has had Parkinson's since the 1980s. He may not be going in the direction you or I like, but no one is on alert. That's the truth."

Ramsey said the Alis still plan to be in Louisville in mid-January for a celebration of the three-time heavyweight champion's 70th birthday, Jan. 19.

Ramsey said he didn't have

any details of Ali's hospital treatment but that he believed, "I don't think he stayed very long," Ramsey said.

The Star reported that it had been told by multiple sources that Ali was rushed from the couple's home in Paradise Valley to the Scottsdale Healthcare Osborn Medical Center on Nov. 19. The Star also said it confirmed a 911 call from the residence, and that Ali was unconscious at the time.

The Star quoted Alan Laitsich, a spokesperson for Paradise Valley Police, saying: "The victim started to pass out in the car and when they got him into the house he fell unconscious."

The magazine said it didn't have details of Ali's treatment or his length of stay at the hospital.

The Nov. 19 rush to the hospital came just five days after Ali attended the funeral of his greatest rival, Joe Frazier. Another boxer who fought Ali for the heavyweight title, Ron Lyle, died Saturday at the age of 70. (USA Today)

FIESTA

From Page 28

Brendon Talania, Ivan Devero, and Ernie Moises hit rally-halting baskets in the fourth quarter, while Elmer Esdrelon led the team's second quarter-recovery to bring Fiesta back into the Final Four after missing the semis last season.

Shirley's failed to march into the semis for the third

straight time despite getting off to a good start in its playoff game over Fiesta. With Marlon De Dios sizzling with 10 points, the host led by as much as 15 points before settling for a 28-21 advantage after the first period.

However, Fiesta quickly regrouped in the second period with the 12 and eight markers of Esdrelon and Devero, respectively, leading the way to take a dou-

ble-digit lead at halftime, 56-46.

Shirley's played catch up from thereon and moved to as close as one point, but simply could not overtake Fiesta and eventually lost the match after going scoreless in the last 2:32 of the game.

An 18-9 scoring run in the first five minutes of the third brought Shirley's within one, 64-65, but Esdrelon and Jinang hit back-to-back treys to give Fiesta more breathing room. Then Shirley's Wowie Abuel scored seven straight points in the closing minutes of the third and Fiesta's lead was down to only four, 79-75, with a full quarter to go.

Despite Shirley's threat, Fiesta managed to hang on to the lead in the fourth with Devero going 6-for-6 from the foul line in the first six minutes of final canto. Shirley's then moved within three, 77-80, off J.R. Barrios' drive, but Talania answered with two consecutive baskets to bring the lead

back to seven, with over three minutes left on the clock.

A Barrios pair of charities cut the lead to three anew, 94-91, with 2:32 remaining in the game, before Moses canned a baseline jumper and escaped with a fastbreak layup to give Fiesta enough cushion.

One free throw each from Bruce Berline and Jinang sealed the deal for Fiesta and the former capped the game with a triple in the last six seconds of the match.

Esdrelon top-scored for Fiesta with 30, while Devero added 19. Jinang and Talania finished with 14, while Jawn Joyner contributed 13.

De Dios paced Shirley's with 27, while Abuel chipped in 16, but had only two points in the fourth. Kae Bernardo also finished in twin digits with 13, but was in and out of the game and scoreless in the fourth. Rommel Usi nailed 10, but was limited to one field goal in each of the four quarters.

SSC

From Page 28

and first student to reach Kilili Beach at the 18:50 mark. Completing the Top 3 in the male students division were Saipan International School Rintaro Miyawaki (21:03) and Whispering Palms' Logan Mister (21:32).

In the female student division, Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School's Conatsu Kaga clocked in at 28:09, more than two minutes ahead of runner-up Soleil Lamar (31:19). Karen Sato rounded out the Top 3 with her 32:45.

In the women's division, Pi-

pic finished first with a time of 22:42, as she beat Sakiko Eda in a sprint to the finish line. Eda logged 22:43 to settle for second place, while Heather Kennedy and Suzy Kindel came in at third and fourth with times of 23:37 and 24:48, respectively.

Participants ran the course with bells placed either on their arms or legs ringing and when they made it to the finish line they received bags of candies and cookies. Raffle prizes were also given away after the race.

SSC would like to thank all the runners and sponsors of the Jingle Bell Run for supporting the fundraiser. Proceeds from the event will be used for the operational costs of the club.

MATANSA

From Page 28

The victory moved Matansa U18 to the semifinals of Pool B, while Shirley's FC was eliminated in the 10-team Challenge Cup. Matansa U18 will face in the semis the winner of this Saturday's game between Paire boys U15 and MP United U15 Silver play.

The all-women crew of Shirley's FC put up a gallant stand against Matansa and even took the early lead when Lalaine Pagarao scored the first goal with only 23 seconds gone by at the start of the match.

Shirley's hung on to the lead in the next 30-plus minutes of the 45-minute first half before Angelo Guevarra lit up the scoreboard for Matansa with his goal in the 37:30 to equalize.

Then less than two minutes later, Matansa scored anew and this time Mayjohn Catindig found the back of the net to give his team the lead. Matansa kept the upper hand at halftime, 2-1, as Shirley's remained cold after the early goal of Pagarao.

In the second half, Matansa made it a 3-1 count after Antonio Borillo hit his first and only goal at the 48:37 mark. Then Jeraldine Castillo finally ended Shirley's dry spell with her goal in the 57:11 mark and sliced Matansa's lead to one. However, Matansa played tough defense in the remaining minutes to foil Shirley's upset bid.

In the other first round game played at Hopwood, MP United U18 clobbered Paire FC women's team, 11-1. Megan Herber notched the lone goal for Paire, while scorers for MP United

PSS 90, PIC/NVM 87

PSS/McGraw-Hill clinched the third semis ticket after outclassing PIC/NVM in the curtain raiser.

PSS took control of the game in the second quarter and thwarted PIC's rally in the fourth to eliminate the 2010 champion.

Dave Sablan finished with 12 first-half points and Kelvin Fitial made nine, as PSS turned a 19-all deadlock to a 46-40 lead at the break. Fitial added seven more, while Sablan drilled five, increasing PSS' advantage to nine in the third, 70-61. PIC failed to overhaul the lead in the third, as only Darwin Barbo drained more than one field goal in the third period.

In the fourth quarter, Sablan and company traded baskets with PIC to keep the win. Sablan finished with 23 points, while his three other teammates scored in double figures and two more combined for 16. Bon Tamayo led PIC with 23.

PSS and Fiesta will meet in the second semis match tonight at 8pm, while early qualifiers Mobil and DFS collide in the first game at 6pm.

First Game

PSS/McGraw-Hill 90 – Sablan 23, Fitial 19, Mendez 11, Villacrusis 11, Cabrera 8, Manibusan 8, Guerrero 2, Lee 2, Itibus 2, Buniag 2.

PIC/NVM 87 – Tamayo 23, Barbo 15, Abuy 13, Lizama 11, Aquino 6, Fernando 6, Rasa 4, Yabut 3, J. Mina 2, Johannes 2, Je. Mina 1, Diaz 1.

Scoring by quarters: 19-19, 46-40, 70-61, 90-87.

Second Game

Fiesta 103 – Esdrelon 30, Devero 19, Talania 14, Jinang 14, Joyner 13, Berline 9, Moises 6.

Shirley's 91 – De Dios 27, Abuel 16, Bernardo 13, Usi 10, Peredo 8, Barrios 7, Catungal 6, Sedillo 6.

Scoring by quarters: 21-28, 56-46, 79-75, 103-91.

MOBIL

From Page 28

Mobil shared the ball well at the start of the first game as a handful of players chipped in for a 14-12 edge in the opening 10 minutes.

Andhok's Alex Lauron muscled his way for eight points in the second quarter, but Mobil buried three treys late in the period to maintain a 35-32 margin at halftime.

Mobil's Angelo Fernando scrambled for eight markers in the first half.

Andhok's kept grinding after the break and mounted a 51-45 comeback heading into

the final period.

With Mobil's first stringers taking a breather, Lauron led Andhok's' third quarter charge with seven points.

Mobil saved its best for last as Jun Estolas returned to the floor and drained a couple of early three-balls for 11 points in the final stanza that went with six big points in the clutch by teammate Larry Sharry.

Mobil 76 – Estolas 25, Sharry 13, Fernando 11, Maratita 10, Lizama 8, Wenceslao 7, Factor 2.

Andhok's 73 – Lauron 29, Artates 11, Tenorio 10, Montano 10, Wesley 3.

Scoring by quarters: 14-12, 35-32, 45-51, 76-73.

finals on Dec. 14.

Paire U15 3, Tan Holdings 2

In the other game at the Oleai pitch, Paire edged Tan Holdings.

Bryan Lee logged twin goals for Paire, while Scott Kim recorded the team's other goal.

Jack Tanapon also made a pair for Tan Holdings with the first one coming in at the 32nd minute to force a tie at halftime, 1-1. Kim nailed Paire's only goal in the first half.

Tanapon hit one more in the second half, but Tan Holdings failed to steal the win after allowing Lee to score two goals in the final frame.

Paire will duel U15 fall league champion MP United Silver this Saturday at 11am at the Oleai pitch after the Paire U18-MP United Blue tiff at 8:30am.

NMA-MISO Cross Country Finals

PHOTOS BY WALTER
CEPEDA SUTHERLAND



The U18 runners dash from the starting line at the start of the U18 championship race held at the American Memorial Park.



The U18 runners stop to pose for a group photo before the start of the championship race at American Memorial Park.



U12 boys winner Djamarch Ong, right, poses with his U12 competitors.



Marianas High School's Beoch Ngirchongor is the first U18 runner to cross the finish line in the NMA-MISO Cross Country Finals held at the American Memorial Park on Saturday.



The Hopwood Junior High School team poses for a team photo after dominating the U14 boys field.



Keon Karibiel, second from left, poses with fellow U8 runners, from left, Jason Sablan, John Hong, and Dylan Mister.



U10 boys Logan Mister, right, poses with fourth placer John Paul Sablan.



The Hopwood Junior High School team poses for a team photo after sweeping the U14 girls field.



The Marianas High School boys team poses for a team photo after winning its third straight title.



The Marianas High School girls team poses for a team photo after winning its third straight title.



**Shorter NBA
schedule has
42 back-to-
back-to-backs**

24

Saipan Tribune Sports

**Marlins trying
to buy up the
best of the pond**

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Fiesta, PSS/McGraw-Hill make semis

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan showed poise in the homestretch to oust Shirley's, 103-91, and advance to the semifinals of the 3rd Annual Shirley's Coffee Shop Invitational Basketball League last Tuesday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.



Fiesta withstood Shirley's repeated comeback bids to set a semis duel against PSS/McGraw-Hill, which earlier eliminated and dethroned 2010 champion Pacific Islands Club/NVM in another playoff match.

See FIESTA on Page 26



Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's Brendon Talania pulls up for a one-handed shot against Shirley's Angel Catungal during their playoff game in the Shirley's caging last Tuesday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

SSC Jingle Bell Run draws more than 80



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Young runners cruise along Beach Road during yesterday's 2011 Saipan Swim Club Jingle Bell Fun Run.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Jingle Bell Fun Run.

The about 5-kilometer race started from the Garapan Fishing Base and ended at the Kilili Beach Park in Susupe with Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel finishing first overall anew with a

time of 17 minutes and 25 seconds. Kabiriel's time in yesterday's race was the fastest in his three wins in the last four editions of the annual fundraiser. In 2008, Kabiriel submitted 17:38 and then posted 17:57 last year.

Joining Kabiriel in the Top 3 of the men's division were Ronald Villafria and Tom Linden, who clocked in at 17:36 and 18:02, respectively.

Michael Mancao of Marianas High School was the fourth overall finisher

See SSC on Page 26

Matansa advances to FA Challenge Cup

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Matansa boys U18 led three others teams to the next round of the 2011 FA Challenge Cup after slipping past Shirley's FC women's squad, 2-1, last Saturday at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

See MATANSA on Page 26

A Matansa striker loses his balance after getting a nudge from Shirley's FC's Lia Rangamar during the first half of their game in the 2011 FA Challenge Cup last Saturday at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.



Mobil nips Andhok's, 76-73

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



Mobil fended off a second half rally by Andhok's, 76-73, in Monday's Garapan Basketball League - IT&E Cup matchup at the Garapan Basketball Court.

The win evened out Mobil's win-loss card to 3-3.

Andhok's gave Mobil hell, but fell a basket short of forcing overtime and is

solemnly still in search of a win after five tries.

Meanwhile, Konflikt-IT&E (4-0) was leading the Ol'Aces (1-2), 68-66, with four minutes left in the game when rain caused an untimely stoppage of play in Monday's second matchup.

The game was scheduled to resume at 6:15pm last night followed by Mobil squaring off against Ol'Aces at 7pm. Then Konflikt-IT&E returns to the floor to take on Andhok's at 9pm; weather permitting.

See MOBIL on Page 26